COUNTERPOINT

HAROLD KNAPIK
and
GORDON RAMSEY

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COUNTERPOINT

by

Harold Knapik

and

Gordon Ramsey

Harold Knapik
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PREFACE

This book is dedicated to Madame Vaurabourg-Honegger with whom the authors studied in Paris at the Ecole Normale de Musique.

The theoretical foundation of this text is the traditional method used at the Ecole Normale and the Conservatoire de Paris as well as in schools of comparable calibre throughout continental Europe.

No attempt has been made to make this study easier since its value to the student is in direct ratio to its rigor, and the study of counterpoint, when correctly taught is never easy for the musician any more than ballet "class," the proper foundation of ballet technique, is ever easy for the dancer.

However, this book is not merely a translation of a French text, new principles have been formulated and the musical examples, the language of the rules, and the format of the book are new.

Finally, it is fitting to say that the publication of this book is due entirely to the disinterested generosity of Mr. Osborn Andreas of Chicago.

Harold Knapik

Gordon Ramsey

Paris - 1958

INTRODUCTION

There is nothing radical and very little that is new about this theory of counterpoint but it is, nevertheless, unique. It is not a theory based on another theory nor is it a "modern" theory with the customary concessions made to the modern pressures that produce such things as "acquaintanceship courses" and "introductory studies." It is designed to teach technique and balance and it goes back to the music that is, even to this day, the most remarkable example of musical balance: the music of Johann Sebastian Bach.

This theory is based on his music but we hasten to say that it has nothing whatever to do with his style which was, of course, extremely personal. The quality of Bach's music which this theory stresses—and this has been ignored in the arguments around and about counterpoint in which his music is invariably invoked—is that it achieves an **exact** balance between harmony and counterpoint. This, obviously, is as it should be for the moment more than one musical voice is put into motion harmony is involved and however "linear" in quality the voices may be it is inconceivable that the quality of one dimension should be sacrificed to the quality of another.

The purpose of this study is to provide the student with a contrapuntal technique and, since technique involves discipline, and music is not an easy art, it is a difficult one indeed. However, the value of the technique far outweighs the difficulties that must be overcome in gaining it. A sound contrapuntal training reveals itself in everything a composer writes and this is true whether he writes in a "contrapuntal style" or in any other style; it reveals itself in the handling of voices, in orchestration, and in every other phase of musical composition.

One recently acquired facet to contrapuntal instruction that we do not subscribe to is the study of the esthetic of melody. It is, we believe, the affair of the musicologists and since the melodic lines in this theory of counterpoint are based on the human voice a simple explanation of its capabilities and scope combined with examples of good lines is sufficient for this study.

Too, the writing of **quasi** eighteenth century "Inventions" does not find a place in this theory. We do feel, though, that the moment a student has acquired something of a technique he should be urged to utilize it in composing **in his own style.**

Since, in the last analysis, the test of any theory is what it produces, and comparison between the examples of realized exercises in this book and those in other books is easily made, we invite such comparison.

DEFINITION, USE, AND PURPOSE OF COUNTERPOINT

There are, today, many conflicting conceptions concerning counterpoint; what it is, what its use is in composition, and what value it has for musicians in general. The answer to this is of course the fact that while the study of counterpoint may have been and still is controversial in some academic circles it has never been anything but an absolute necessity for the composer, conductor, executant or musicologist desirous of possessing the necessary tools of his art.

This controversy about how, when, or whether to teach counterpoint dates from the time of Johann Sebastian Bach when his sons, with other composers more concerned with form than with content, left the great contrapuntal tradition behind in the race to achieve the new drama of the sonata. This, although it was not apparent to them at the time, was a great gain for which they relinquished an even greater resource. But gains in art are often made in just that way and nothing is needed but the right man to come along to pull it all together again. Mozart was that man and he did restore the balance but at the cost of a crisis in his creative life that lasted for two years; and two years in the life of Mozart was as ten in the life of an ordinary man.

This crisis came about when, quite late in what was to be a tragically short life, Mozart became acquainted with the music of Johann Sebastian Bach. On hearing this music he immediately realized that his and his contemporaries' music lacked a powerful and essential element: the contrapuntal. Characteristically, even though he was perfectly aware of his value as a composer and despite the fact that he was successful insofar as recognition of his quality was concerned he abandoned everything in order to work at assimilating this element into his style. In the sense that problems in art are only resolved through creation he struggled with it throughout the remainder of his life; but that he succeeded is attested by the extraordinary quality of his last works.

It seems just that Bach's music should have brought a return to the element that he had done so much to perfect and that music had begun to lose in his lifetime. But nothing short of a Bach could have impressed a Mozart and it is to Bach that all subsequent composers have turned for contrapuntal guidance. It is he to whom we also turn.

It is our belief then that Bach's music embodies within it the most integrated and fruitful set of contrapuntal principles—principles that had been observed and formulated much before his time, it is needless to say, but which he clarified and intensified in his music.

Counterpoint or polyphony is usually defined in dictionaries as the combining of melodies. Some more accurately define it as the combining of melodies in a manner that while harmonious permits individuality of the voices. The French Nouveau Petit Larousse adds to these, "a composition written according to the rules of counterpoint." This last demonstrates admirable faith in inviolable tradition.

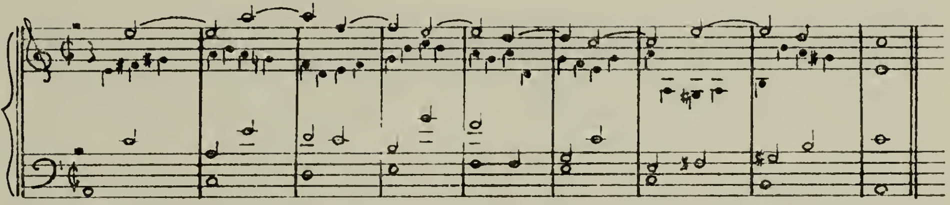
With the exception of the word "melodies" which should be melodic lines, contrapuntal lines or any other term that does not imply the simultaneous employment of two or more different "tunes," these definitions are not incorrect. They are, however, incomplete. They do not make clear the most important point: these melodic lines that are combined while remaining individual, have grown from or are the development of a central idea. In Bach's Fugue in D Major in the second book of the Well-Tempered Clavichord even the counter-subject is taken from the theme. The entire composition of fifty-one measures in C time, which has four highly developed voices, grows from a two measure theme. This is an extreme example. The rule in the study of fugue is that the counter-subject should in no way resemble the subject but should nevertheless appear to be inseparable from it. This illustrates the connection between counterpoint and form, and consequently with pure music. This connection will be discussed later.

Another point that is not made clear by the usual definitions is that counterpoint means movement; movement of an entirely different sort than that afforded by the symmetrical phrases punctuated by the semi and full cadences of harmonic music. The bulk of classical and romantic music since Bach, for example, had for its basic unit the eight bar theme. This has been much modified in modern music where the phrasing is freer, but very often its legacy appears in repeated moments of repose and in series of anticlimaxes and climaxes.

Nevertheless, all musical elements have their place but contrapuntal writing has a particularly important one. This, naturally enough, is in the development sections of compositions of some length. Contrapuntal writing is, in fact, the very essence of developmental writing, and is it not in the development sections of larger works that a composer creates the stresses that make his world? One can, by comparing the development sections of Beethoven's early piano sonatas with the corresponding sections of his later sonatas, realize the fruit of his struggle with the contrapuntal element. The later development sections seem to grow naturally and achieve the elemental surge that only contrapuntal writing can accomplish, especially when written by a master.

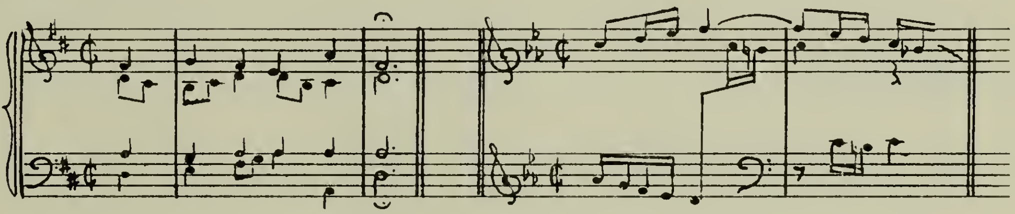
Our definition of counterpoint is the combining of two or more melodic lines in such a manner that, while maintaining their individuality, they support and develop the central (thematic, harmonic, rhythmic, formal) scheme, and at the same time contribute dynamic movement. This suffices as a technical definition but musically it seems better to say that counterpoint, or polyphony, means development, and therefore interest in depth, and dynamic movement.

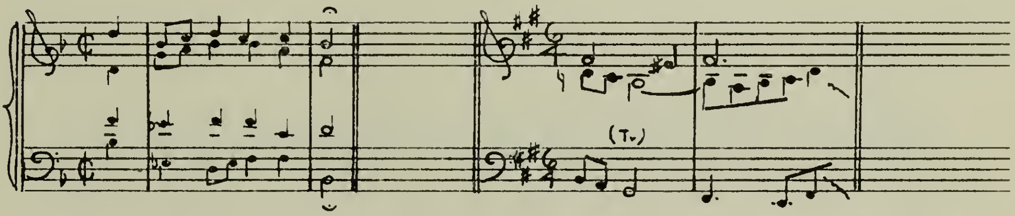
Species counterpoint—the method employed in this text—while neutral and affording no opportunity for personal expression except musicality, is polyphonic composition in microcosm. This is illustrated by the following example:

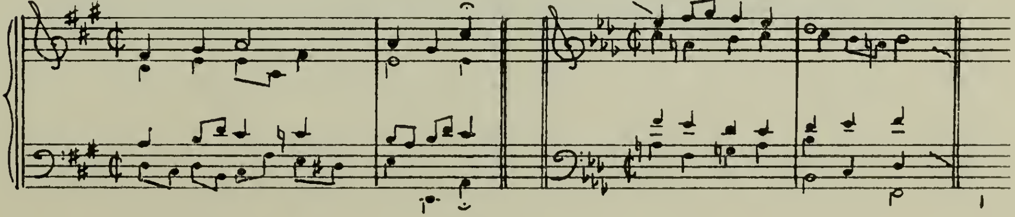


The interest in depth is assured by the melodic and rhythmic individuality of each species. The movement is assured by the unvarying rhythm of the different species and also by avoiding any suggestion of a cadence or half cadence until the final cadence, which illustrates the cooperation between harmony and counterpoint.

To speak of avoiding cadences through the cooperation of harmony when we have referred to harmonic music as being punctuated by semi and complete cadences is perhaps not clear. What is meant is that the means that can create a cadence—harmony in short—can naturally be employed to avoid one. For example, in the Bach Chorales the suspension, which is as much a harmonic as a contrapuntal device, is most frequently used to effect a cadence. The same device in the Bach Fugues is employed to avoid one:







To relate species counterpoint to free composition is not difficult. The interest in depth becomes development in depth, the dynamic movement is obtained through the same cooperation with harmony, whether tonal or atonal, by employing devices that, while not maintaining unvarying rhythm in the voices (although this does occur), distribute and overlap the melodic lines in such a manner that dynamic movement is achieved.

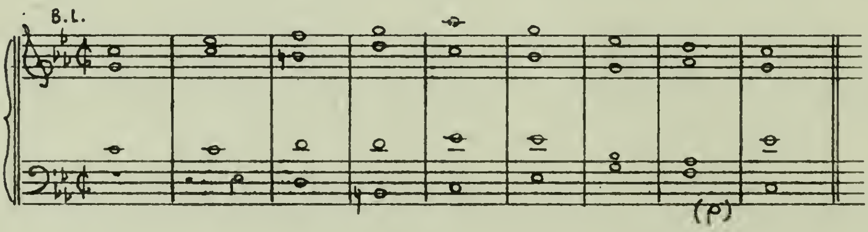
Naturally, species counterpoint is only part of the contrapuntal technique. There are many other devices that belong to the realm of fugue but that is another study.

To return to the subject of counterpoint's connection with musical form, we must first say that musical form should not be conceived simply as a series of phrases, themes, second subjects, bridge passages, etc., occupying so much space in time. To discuss the form of a composition one must have analyzed every musical element employed, and they are many. One must consider what occurs; what happens and where. When this is done, of course, nothing has been gained except comprehension of how the composer went about it. However, we are primarily concerned with counterpoint's utility for the composer and the main difficulty a composer has in working out a composition is maintaining unity within a movement and getting from place to place. The purpose of the study of counterpoint is precisely to develop this technique. Its emphasis is unity in every dimension. Its ideal is logical continuity and movement from beginning to final cadence.

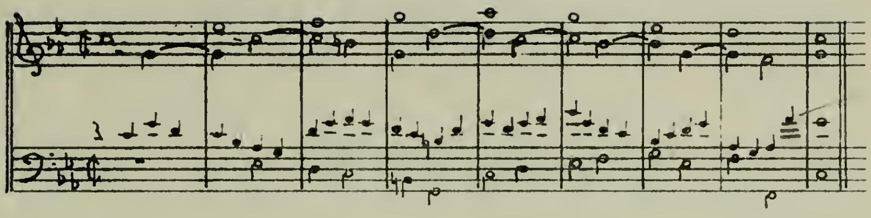
The following is an example of the efficacy of species counterpoint in providing interest in depth and movement. Example (a) is the harmonic framework of example (b) which is species counterpoint:

EXAMPLE

(a)



(b)



a♭

The ear recognizes the richness of the logical dissonances brought about by the different species encountering each other while supporting the central harmonic scheme and moving in their own rhythms.

In sum, the whole emphasis of the theory is to pose a strict harmonic-rhythmic framework and force the student through linear devices to work his way to the realization of an ensemble composed of supple and individual melodic lines that in their combination provide interest and intensity. In this way a contrapuntal technique is gained.

I THE BASIC LINE (B.L.)

The B.L. (cantus fermus) is the melody upon which the student superimposes a counterpoint (another melody) or counterpoints (other melodies). It is the armature or framework of each set of exercises and it is thus important that it be properly constructed. However, we do not intend to go into the esthetic of melody—the Basic Lines given at the end of this book are particularly suitable for working with this text and they can serve as models—but we may say that they should have the following characteristics:

(a) Should contain not less than nine measures and not more than fifteen.

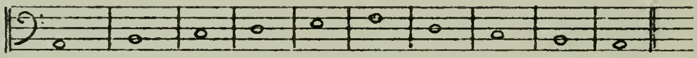
(b) Are always written in C time.

(c) Must begin and end on the tonic and the note before the final note is invariably the supertonic.

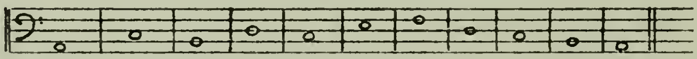
Note: A given line is unalterable but may be transposed.

The following are examples of a good and a bad Basic Line:

EXAMPLE: A-
(good)



EXAMPLE: B-
(bad)



The basic line shown in example A is conjunct and is not repetitious.

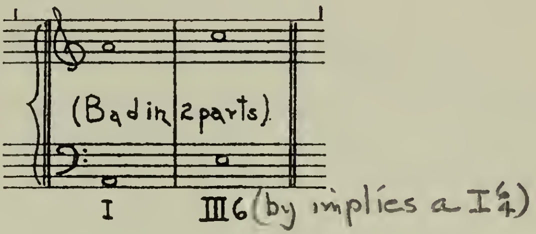
The line shown in example B contains three third degrees of the scale which necessitates harmonic repetition and the sequential figure composed of three two note groups in the first six measures is anti-contrapuntal in character.

II HARMONY EMPLOYED

The only chords permitted in root position are perfect chords. As in traditional harmony, the degrees of the scale are ranged in importance in the following order: I - V - IV (the principal and strongest degrees on which are formed the principal triads that determine the tonality of any exercise) II - VI - III (or secondary degrees.)

All chords of the sixth are permitted but under no condition is a six-four or a passage sounding like a movement to a six-four chord permitted.

EXAMPLE:



NOTE: All the examples in the General Rules written in two parts, unless specifically stated as pertaining only to two part counterpoint, illustrate rules that govern the movement of extreme voices in all the exercises, regardless of the number of voices.

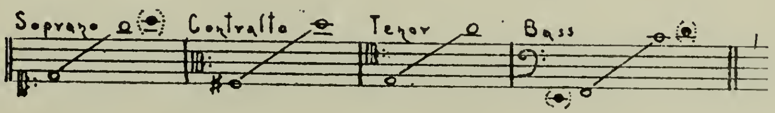
III MELODIC INTERVALS EMPLOYED

The only intervals permitted are the minor and major second, the minor and major third, the perfect fourth, the perfect fifth, the minor sixth and the octave.

IV RANGE OF VOICES

The clefs for the various voices should be used. It is the best method of assuring awareness of the linear quality of each voice. The following example gives the ideal range of each voice with its clef:

EXAMPLE:



NOTE: If the solution to an exercise demands the employment of a slightly wider range it is permitted if the exercise is the last of a set and is of good quality.

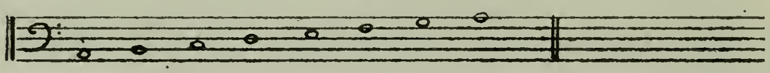
V REPETITION

In this study, no repetition is permitted, either of a note, a figure, or of a chord, if that chord is repeated in the same precise disposition. Since independence of melody is the object of this study, and the continued accompaniment of a melody at a set interval does nothing more than reproduce that melody on a different degree, not more than three consecutive thirds or sixths are permitted.

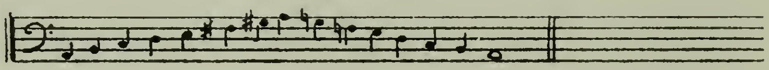
VI CONTOUR OF THE COUNTERPOINT

In forming the voices, the student may use the Natural and Melodic minor scales. The Harmonic minor scale, since it contains the augmented second interval, cannot be used in melodic writing.

EXAMPLE: Natural minor

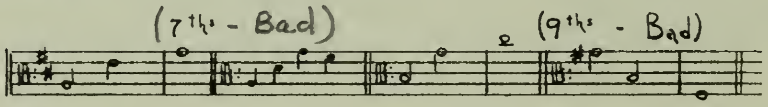


EXAMPLE: Melodic minor



The counterpoint should be as conjunct as possible. The arpeggio is the antithesis of counterpoint. Above all, arpeggios forming 7ths and 9ths, with certain exceptions, must be avoided.

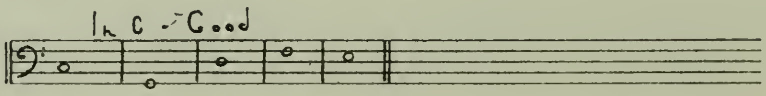
EXAMPLE:



EXCEPTIONS:

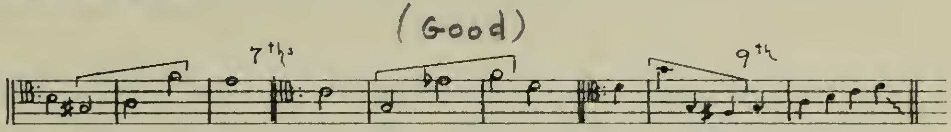
In whole note species an arpeggio forming a 7th may occasionally be used.

EXAMPLE:



7ths and 9ths in a three note figure may also be used provided they are produced as a note on either end of the leap of a minor sixth or octave.

EXAMPLE:



In every case the first and last notes of the three note figure should be the beginning of a change of direction in the melody.

VII HARMONY WITHIN THE MEASURE

Only one chord per measure is permitted. The first beat of each measure determines the harmony of that measure and therefore, all voices, except in the case of suspensions, must have a chordal note on this beat.

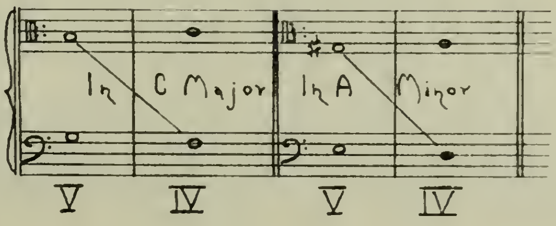
VIII CONSECUTIVE FIFTHS AND OCTAVES

Consecutive fifths and octaves are forbidden regardless of whether they are written in similar or contrary motion. Parallel octaves and fifths are naturally forbidden.

IX FALSE RELATION

The false relation of the tritone is to be avoided only when in both major and minor the fifth degree moves to the fourth degree in the **lowest voice** and the leading tone moves to the tonic in the **highest voice**.

EXAMPLE:

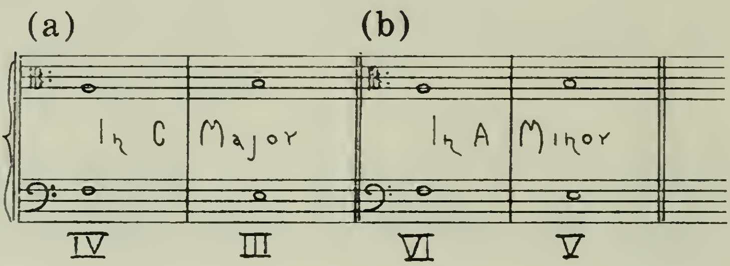


To avoid confusion on this point of false relation it is best to say that the following movements **are permitted**:

(a) when in major the fourth degree moves to the third degree in the **lowest voice** and the sixth degree moves to the leading tone in the highest voice:

(b) in minor when the sixth degree moves to the fifth degree in the **lowest voice** and the tonic moves to the second degree in the **highest voice**:

EXAMPLE:



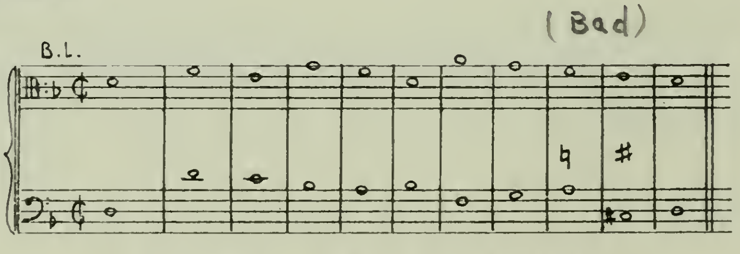
X EMPLOYMENT OF THE UNISON

Except for the first and the last measures, the unison is forbidden on the strong beat of the measure.

XI CHROMATICISM

Chromaticism is forbidden whether actual or harmonically implied.

EXAMPLE:



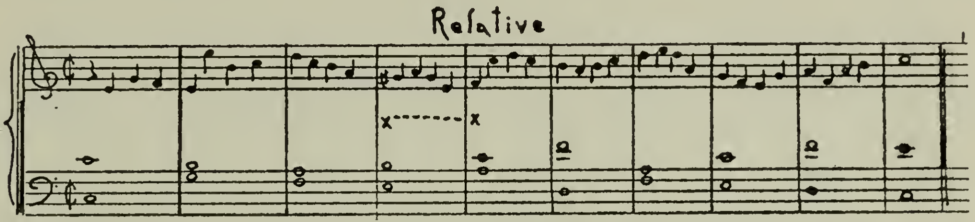
XII CROSSING OF VOICES

It is not contrary to the principles of counterpoint to cross voices. This, however, must be done with the greatest care, keeping in mind the effect produced by the two voice textures when crossed, and above all should be of short duration.

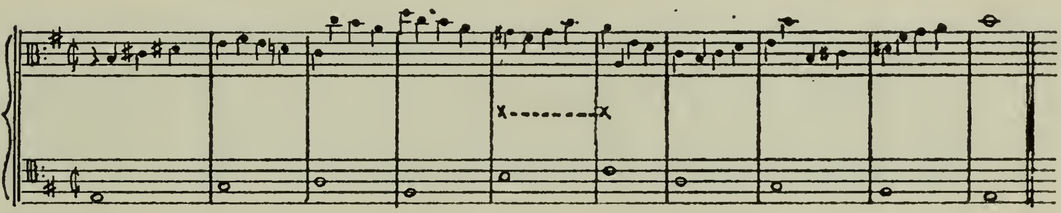
XIII MODULATION

It is permissible to modulate to the relative key and, in theory, to neighboring keys, but, while the modulation to the relative is often natural and sometimes necessary, particularly in a minor exercise, the modulation to a neighboring key can rarely be accomplished naturally in exercises of the length used in this study.

EXAMPLE:



EXAMPLE:

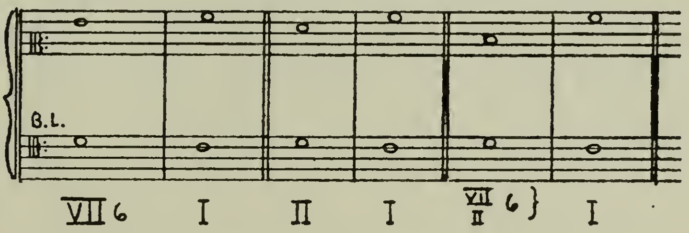


The above are examples of modulations achieved naturally.

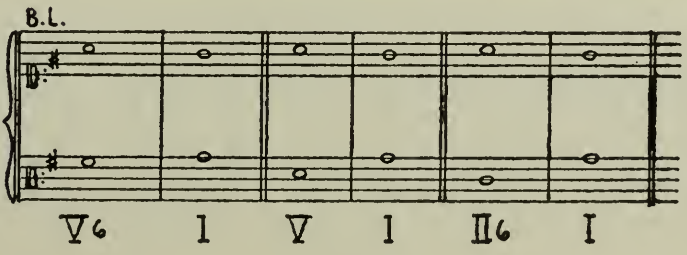
XIV ENDINGS

Since the note that precedes the final note or tonic of the B.L. is invariably the supertonic, the possible endings to the exercises are thereby limited. They are:

EXAMPLE: (a) when the B.L. is in the lowest voice:



(b) when the B.L. is in the highest voice.



Note: The above, of course, represent only the harmonic framework of the endings. The conceivable endings based on these frames in employing the various species are myriad.

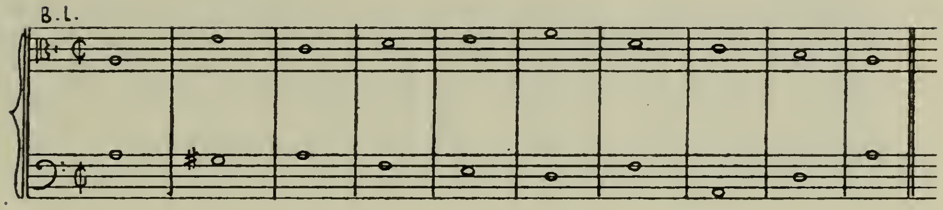
XV CONTINUITY

Contrapuntal movement is essentially flowing and the moments of repose and the half cadences of harmonic exercises are foreign to its spirit. The rule that governs this principle is:

> A complete cadence or an octave on the tonic in the extreme parts in the course of an exercise is forbidden. Naturally, in the case of a modulation, this does not apply to the key of the exercise but to the key into which one has modulated and in this type of counterpoint there is never any doubt as to which key any chord belongs.

Note: These exercises should not be worked out at the piano. It is certainly a good idea to play them on the piano **after completion** since there exist perfectly regular progressions that do not sound well in a certain context and the piano can then be used to verify the ear.

NOTE AGAINST NOTE



This species is composed of a B.L. against which the student writes another melody in whole notes—the counterpoint.

I BEGINNINGS AND ENDINGS

When the counterpoint is in the upper voice it may begin on the dominant or the tonic. When it is in the lower voice it must begin on the tonic. In both cases, above or below the B.L., the counterpoint, on principle, ends on the tonic but in exceptional cases to vary the counterpoint one may end on the dominant.

II GOVERNING ELEMENTS

A—The aim and real difficulty of this species is to achieve harmonic completeness and variety while simultaneously creating another independent line in the counterpoint.

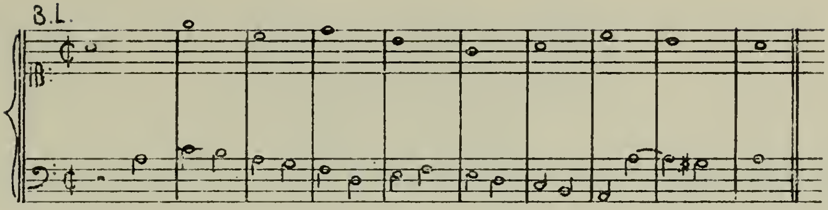
B—Octaves and fifths are best employed on the strong degrees of the scale and are most effective when used as shown in the above example where the octave in measure five does not alter the harmonic completeness maintained throughout the whole exercise. This example is a case in point and emphasizes the importance of having the voices move contrary to each other. Counterpoint or the individuality of separate voices came into existence through this simple rule of contrary motion.

EXERCISES:

In all the species in two parts the student should write 3 exercises with the B.L. in the lowest voice in both major and minor, and three exercises with the B.L. in the upper voice in both major and minor. All the exercises in major should be completed before beginning those in minor. In any one species only 2 B.L. should be used, one for the major exercises and one for the minor. The student should not, however, use the same 2 B.L. for all the species since such a practice confines him to an unvarying harmonic pattern.

NOTE: The essence of this entire theory—most of the rules, exceptions to the rules, esthetic indications, etc.—is to be found in the two part exercises. For this reason extreme care should be taken in working through this section. As the number of voices increase and new problems arise, additional rules will be given and indicated as new.

TWO NOTES AGAINST ONE



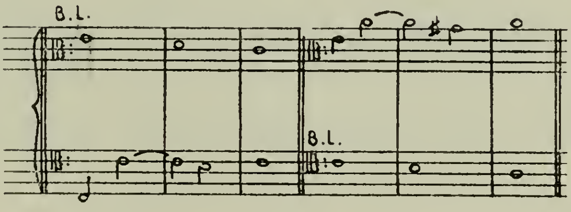
This species is composed of a B.L. against which the student writes a counterpoint in half notes.

I BEGINNINGS AND ENDINGS

A—The counterpoint always begins, after a half bar rest, on the tonic or the dominant when the counterpoint is in the upper voice and with the tonic when the counterpoint is in the lower voice. The last measure must be a whole note on the tonic.

B—To add variety to the endings in this species, suspensions are permitted in the next to the last measure.

EXAMPLE:



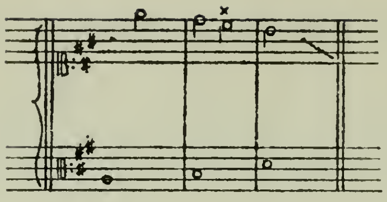
II GOVERNING ELEMENTS

A—With the exception of the final measure, the unison is permitted on the weak beat only.

B—This species offers the student the opportunity to use **passing notes**, the essence of counterpoint.

The passing note is a non-chordal note moving conjunctly-diatonically between two chordal notes of two successive chords. It fills in the interval of a third and always occurs on the weak pulse of the measure.

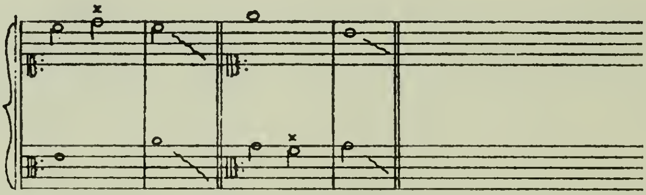
EXAMPLE:



C—Embellishments, both upper and lower, may be employed.

The embellishment is a melodic ornament consisting of three notes. It begins with a given note, moves one or one-half step to its upper or lower neighbor and returns to the original note.

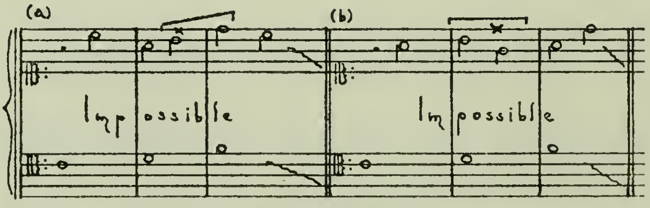
EXAMPLE:



D—IT IS FORBIDDEN TO LEAP TO OR FROM NON-CHORDAL TONES.

They must be approached and left by conjunct movement.

EXAMPLE:

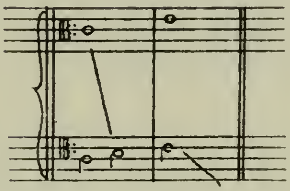


The chord of the second measure in (a) on the previous page is determined by the fifth, D to A, therefore, the second half note, B, is non-chordal and would have to continue in conjunct motion either to C or return to the A.
In (b) on the previous page the chord of the second measure is determined by the sixth, D to B, consequently the second half note, G, is non-chordal.

III ELEMENTS THAT COULD CAUSE CONFUSION

A—The minor second should be avoided **in two parts** when used as in the example below:

EXAMPLE:



In this counterpoint, which employs an idealized style of voice writing and which is assumed to be in slow tempo, the above progression is harsh. However, later, when writing in 3 and 4 parts, this harshness is softened by the other voices.

B—The student is reminded again that there is only one strong beat to each measure whether the measure be broken down into units of whole notes, half notes, or quarter notes. Therefore, non-harmonic tones may occur at any point during the measure other than the first beat. This further explains Rule VII of the General Rules.

C—"Two fifths and two octaves must not follow each other, since that is not only a vitium, but it sounds ill." The above quotation is taken from Bach's rules for thorough bass and is not a reference to a law of nature but to an esthetic principle developed within a particular framework. This study is based on those principles and the following rule must be observed:

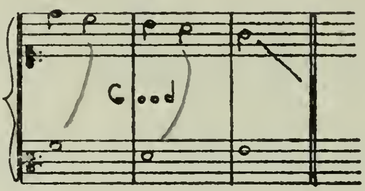
SUCCESSIVE FIFTHS MUST BE SEPARATED BY AT LEAST ONE CHANGE OF CHORD.

It is fully realized that to the modern ear any succession of even parallel fifths is not shocking but every idiom has its governing principles and the gravest error is to have inconsistencies within an idiom.

(1) Successive fifths are permitted when separated only by one half note provided:

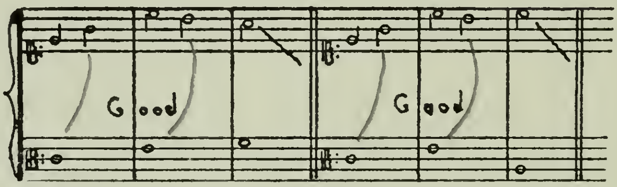
(a) both are passing notes which insures that they will be approached and left in conjunct movement:

EXAMPLE:



(b) the second is a passing note or embellishment; again insuring conjunct movement:

EXAMPLE:

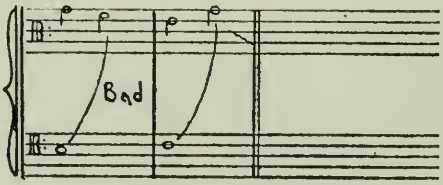


In other words, successive fifths can sound well only when their succession is not emphasized. The rule is:

IF THE SECOND OF TWO SUCCESSIVE FIFTHS IS APPROACHED AND LEFT IN CONJUNCT MOVEMENT THE FIFTHS WILL NOT BE EMPHASIZED.

(2) However, the **opposite** arrangement of the successive fifths, the first a passing note, the second a chordal note, is not permitted:

EXAMPLE:

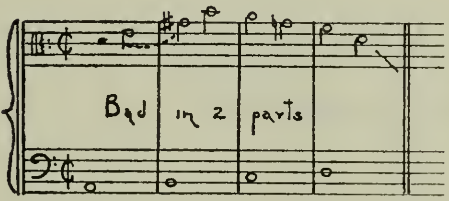


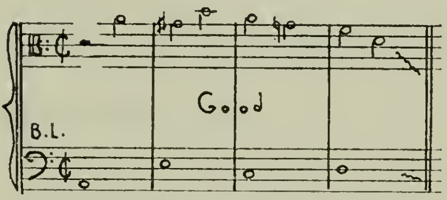
Because of the stress placed on the second fifth through being approached by disjunct movement, the ear immediately recalls the previous fifth, whether perfect, diminished or augmented, and their succession is emphasized. If the student will simply play the above three examples on the piano, the difference in stress of the successive fifths will become apparent.

(3) Successive octaves are not a problem in this species since it is not possible, harmonically, to write the second as a passing note or embellishment.

D—On the second and fifth degrees when writing in two parts avoid using the sixth without its third, above all when the preceding chord contains the note that could form the fourth on these two degrees. What occurs in this sequence is that the ear retains the note that could make a fourth with the bass of the following chord and the resulting sound is an implied six-four chord which is forbidden. The student will recall that in General Rule II he is warned to avoid passages that **sound** like a movement to a six-four chord.

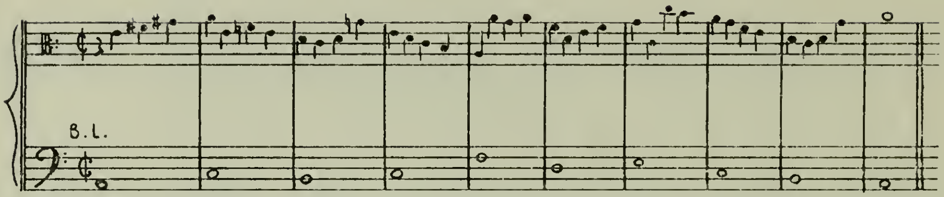
EXAMPLE:





THIRD SPECIES—TWO PARTS

FOUR NOTES AGAINST ONE



This species is composed of a B.L. against which the student writes a counterpoint in quarter notes.

I BEGINNINGS AND ENDINGS

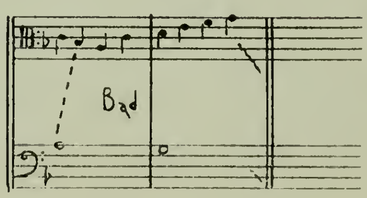
The first measure contains a quarter rest and three quarter notes which, when the counterpoint is in the upper voice, may begin with either the dominant or the tonic. When the counterpoint is in the lower voice it must begin with the tonic. The last measure of the counterpoint is always a whole note on the tonic.

II GOVERNING ELEMENTS

A—The **unison** is permitted on any other than the first quarter note in the measure. However, the student must be cautioned in his treatment of the unison:

(1) IT IS FORBIDDEN TO EMBELLISH THE UNISON:

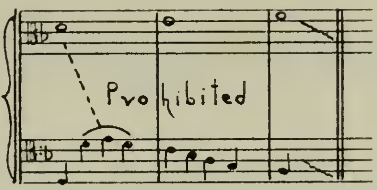
EXAMPLE:



(This is example for rule (2). Top of next page.)

(2) IT IS INADMISSABLE TO APPROACH THE UNISON BY THE INTERVAL OF A SECOND:

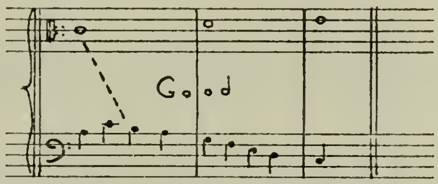
EXAMPLE:



(This is example for rule (1). Bottom of last page.)

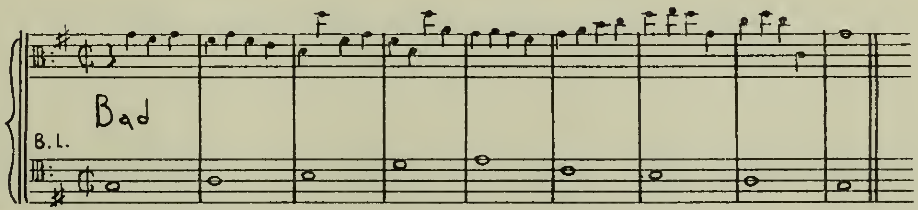
(3) But, the opposite, to approach the unison by disjunct movement and leave by conjunct movement, is very good.

EXAMPLE:



B—Because the number of passing notes and embellishments possible in the third species is greater than in the first two species, the student should be warned that mere legality of movement does not excuse awkward and repetitive passages such as the following.

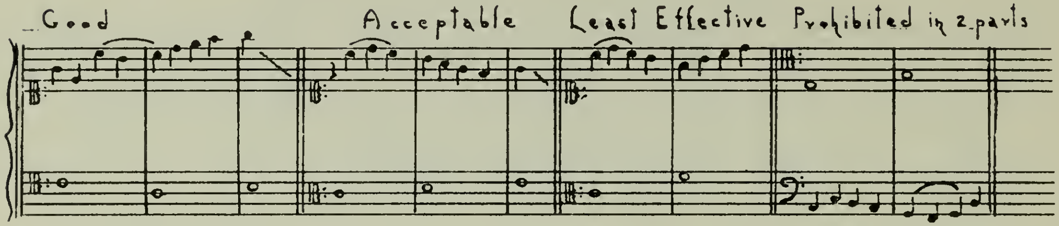
EXAMPLE:



III ELEMENTS THAT COULD CAUSE CONFUSION

A—Any one of the three notes in a chord may be embellished but the least rich of these is the octave. The octave above may in certain cases be embellished but embellishing the octave below should at all times be avoided in two part writing. This rule should always be kept in mind, but when more and more parts are added the possibility of the embellished octave sounding well is increased.

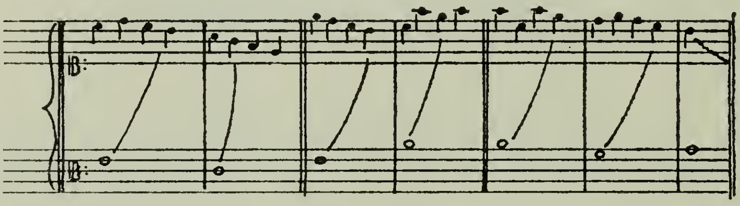
EXAMPLE:



B—Successive fifths not separated by a change of chord are permitted when:

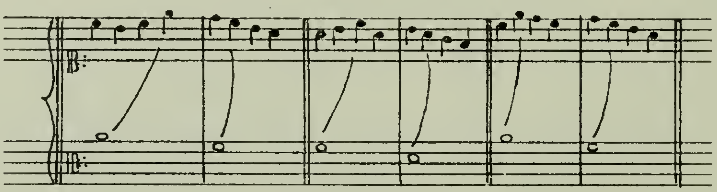
(1) they both occur on non-chordal notes:

EXAMPLE:



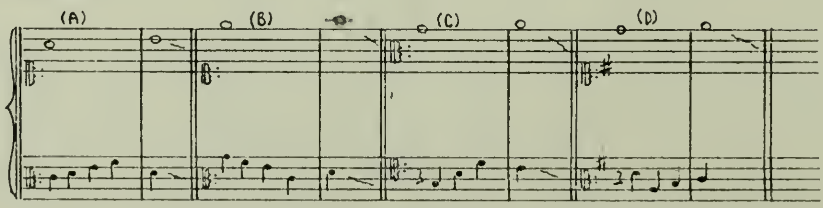
(2) the first is a chordal note and the second is non-chordal note:

EXAMPLE:



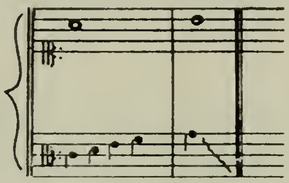
C—Since in this species it is very easy to fall upon a melodic formula containing incorrect harmony, the student must be cautioned against inadvertently using passages such as the following:

EXAMPLE:



All the preceding examples violate the rule that one may not leap to or from non-chordal notes, or form a 6-4 chord within the melodic movement. However, if in example (a) the last quarter note continued on to a G in the second measure, the F would then become a passing note and the passage would be correct.

EXAMPLE:

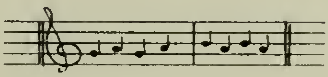


The above example brings out this important principle:

> So long as the first note of every measure is a chordal note, quarter note movement may continue in any direction and strike any note, chordal or non-chordal, as long as it moves conjunctly.

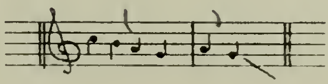
D—(1) It is, of course, very bad melodic writing to write repetitive figures such as the following:

EXAMPLE:



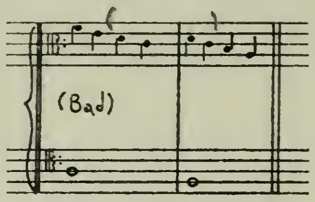
Nevertheless, the above figures may be used when the repetition is separated by a bar line:

EXAMPLE:



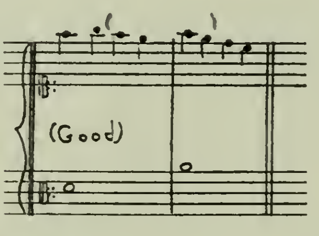
(2) It should be pointed out, however, that while the following repetitious figure is dull because it is contained in a two-measure sequence: separated by a bar line, the passage is

EXAMPLE:



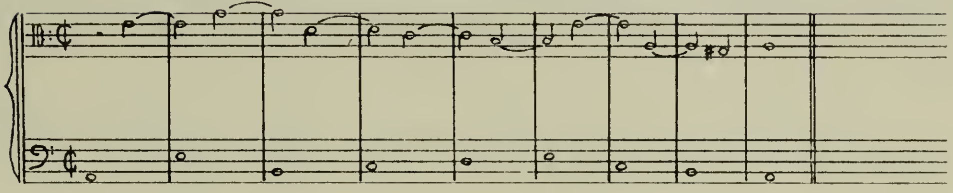
The same repetition may be employed in a very acceptable manner when embodied in different figures such as those shown in the following example:

EXAMPLE:



FOURTH SPECIES—TWO PARTS

SUSPENSIONS



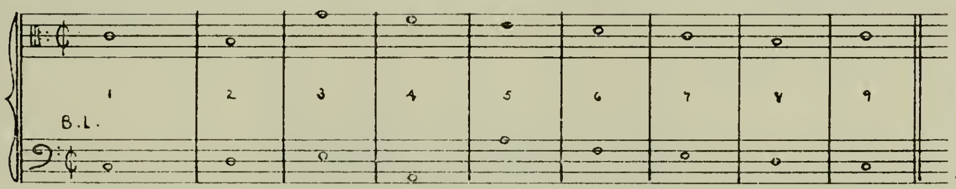
This species is composed of a B.L. above or below which the student writes a counterpoint consisting of a series of suspensions, consonant or dissonant.

A suspension is a whole note retarded one half beat and may thus be considered a displaced first species.

In the following example:

EXAMPLE:

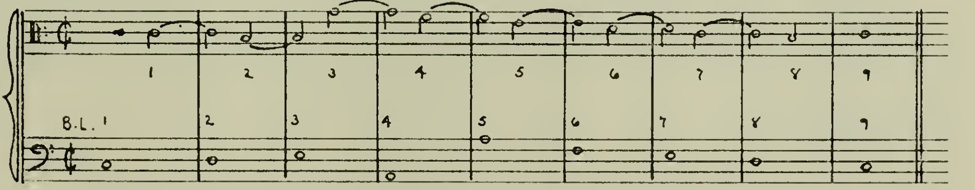
This should be second example in series.



The counterpoint may be placed in direct relation to the B.L. and the result becomes an exercise in first species:

EXAMPLE:

This should be first example in series.



I BEGINNINGS AND ENDINGS

The counterpoint may begin with either the tonic or the dominant after a half note rest when the counterpoint is in the upper voice and with the tonic when it is in the lower voice. In any case, it ends on the tonic.

II GOVERNING ELEMENTS

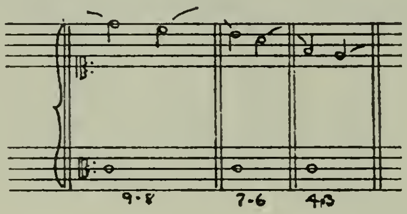
A—A dissonant suspension **always** resolves by descending one degree.

A dissonant suspension **never** ascends.

When regarded measure by measure the dissonant suspensions are:

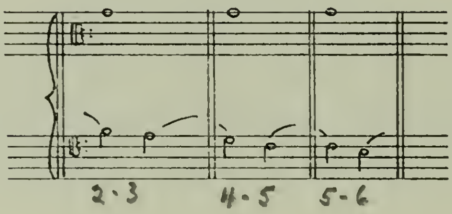
(1) when the counterpoint is in the **upper voice**:

EXAMPLE:



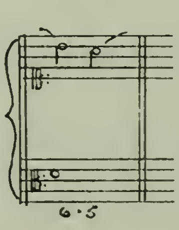
(2) when the counterpoint is in the **lower voice**:

EXAMPLE:



(3) The suspension 6-5 may be employed occasionally but it carries the least accent and must be handled carefully in order not to imply a 6/4 chord or two chords per measure:

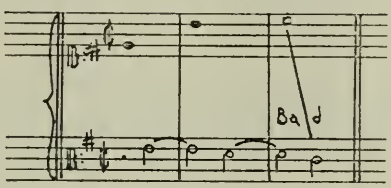
EXAMPLE:



The suspended intervals may be either major or minor, perfect or augmented, whichever the case may be in relation to the degree of the scale on which they occur.

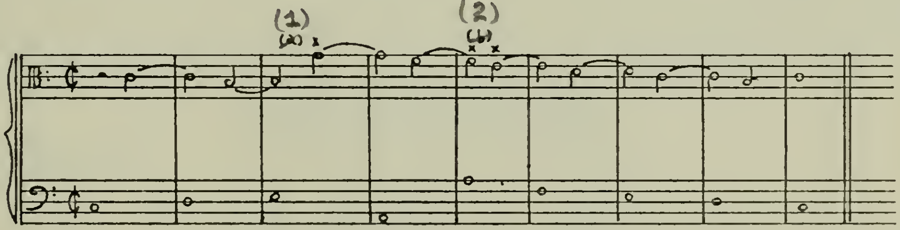
B—When the counterpoint is in the lower voice a dissonant suspension **is impossible if the resolution forms an octave with the B.L.**

EXAMPLE:



C—When the suspension is consonant, it **must** be left in disjunct movement:

EXAMPLE:



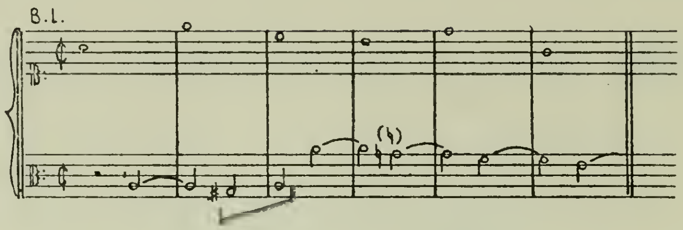
(1) The B is consonant with the E and therefore must jump to another chordal note.

(2) Though the F is consonant with the A, it must be considered as a non-chordal note or the result would be two chords per measure.

D—The following are some modifying rules resulting from the difficulty of this species:

(1) If, despite every effort, it is found impossible for technical or musical reasons to write an unbroken series of suspensions, they may be broken by the use of two half notes:

EXAMPLE:



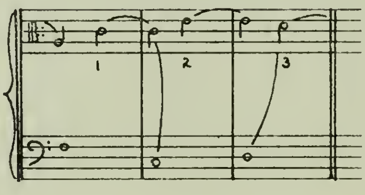
(2) Exceptionally, to vary the suspensions, one may begin in the **upper voice** with the third and end with the fifth.

III ELEMENTS THAT COULD CAUSE CONFUSION

A—Since the note that forms the chord in this species is displaced one half note away the scanning for octaves and fifths must be done in the following manner:

EXAMPLE:

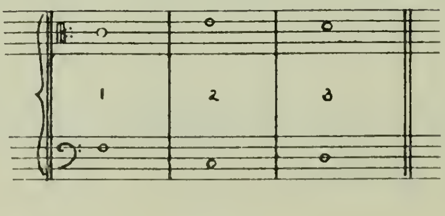
(a)



(1) Here we have consecutive octaves **in sound** because of the stressed tones.

EXAMPLE:

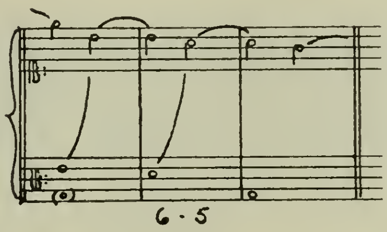
(b)



We certainly find no consecutive octaves in example (b) but, as it stands in its retarded form in example (a) the octave on C in the second measure is stressed because the C in the counterpoint is a chordal note and produces the sound of consecutives with the stressed octave on D in the third bar. These octaves when emphasized by the suspension violate the rule that successive octaves or fifths must be separated by at least one change of chord.

(2) Though a suspension from 6-5 may on occasion be used, consecutives are formed when used as in the following example:

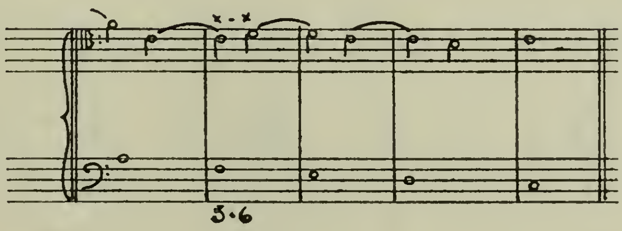
EXAMPLE:



However, the suspension in the second measure would be permissable if G instead of E were the note of the B.L. in the first measure.

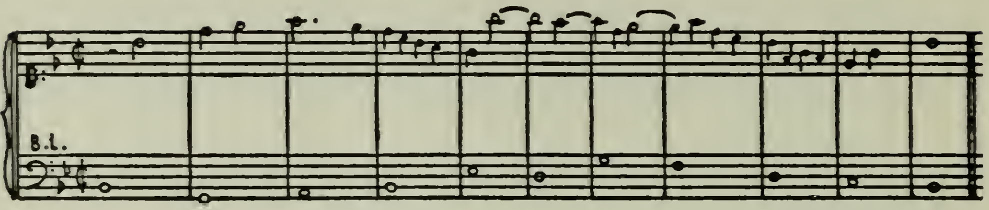
B—If the first beat of a measure is consonant and the line of suspensions is to be maintained, it is **impossible to ascend in conjunct movement** for such movement produces two chords per measure:

EXAMPLE:



FIFTH SPECIES—TWO PARTS

FLORID COUNTERPOINT



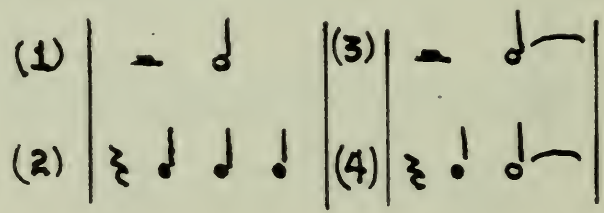
This species is composed of a melange of species two, three, four, and in the place of the whole note species one, the dotted half note followed by a quarter or two eighth notes, and in the case of suspensions, the use of an auxiliary which may be a quarter or two eighths.

I BEGINNINGS AND ENDINGS

The counterpoint when in the upper voice may begin on either the tonic or the dominant. When it is the lower voice, it must begin on the tonic.

The following illustrates the beginnings possible in this species in terms of note values:

EXAMPLE:

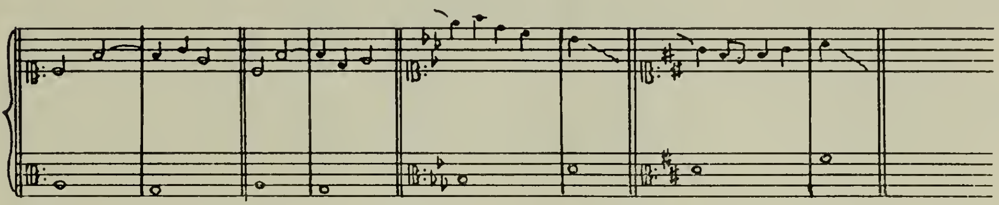


The last note of the counterpoint as in all the other species must be the tonic.

II GOVERNING ELEMENTS

A—The auxiliary as a new element is illustrated first. The following are some examples of its correct employment:

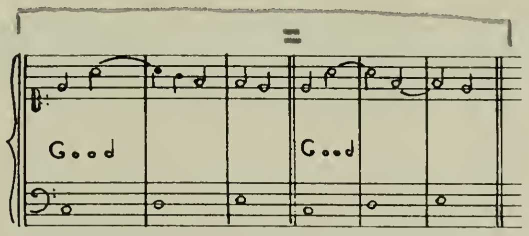
EXAMPLE:

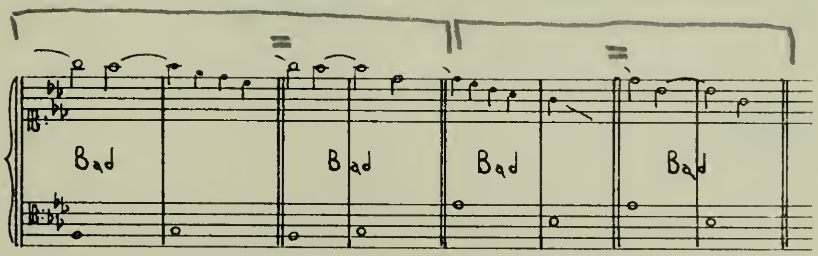


B—**IMPORTANT**: The suspensions, consonant or dissonant, with or without the auxiliary, always resolves on the second half note of the measure and must therefore be consonant with the bass. (Needless to say it must be the correct consonant.) It is best to regard a suspension as a pure suspension and then find the proper auxiliary.

An example of the proper and improper use of the suspension follows:

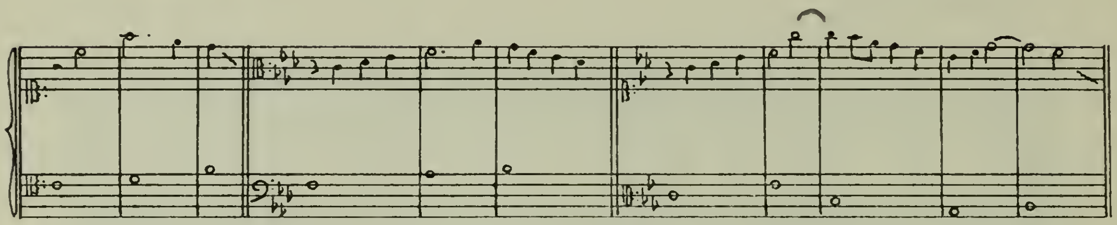
EXAMPLE:





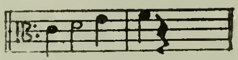
C—The following are examples of the dotted half note followed by a quarter or two eighths in both conjunct and disjunct movement:

EXAMPLE:



D—Syncopation is not permitted:

EXAMPLE:

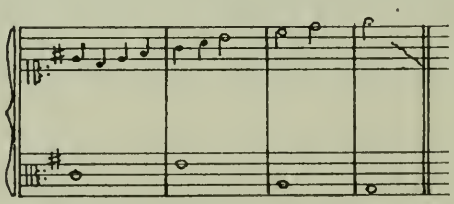


E—Avoid the use of any species for more than two measures. Exceptionally suspensions may be employed for three.

III ELEMENTS THAT COULD CAUSE CONFUSION

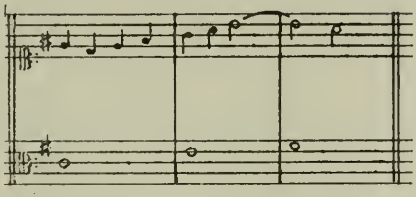
A—Measure two in the following example illustrates an awkward transition from quarter notes to half notes:

EXAMPLE:



The following illustrates the same rhythm in the first two measures but with the employment of the suspension which is excellent:

EXAMPLE:



B—The real difficulty of this species is usually referred to as a problem in the correct disposition of rhythms. This is one aspect of any musical passage not written in undeviating rhythm, but the exercises in florid counterpoint like all the others must be viewed in their entirety and, while only in this species does the element of choice of rhythms enter, it is not simply in moving smoothly from one rhythm to another that one writes a good melody, but rather the judicious use of all the elements—figures, intervals, harmony and rhythm.

THREE PART COUNTERPOINT

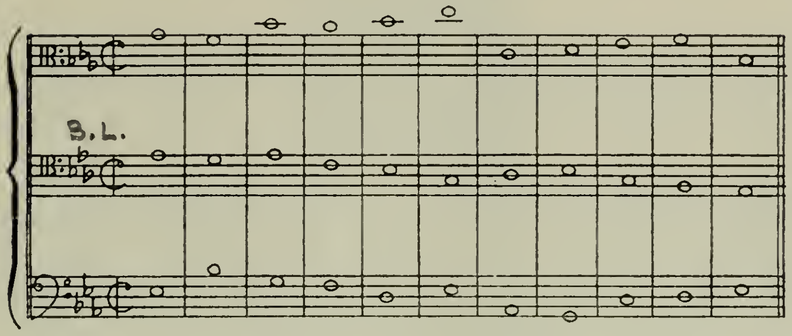
In three part counterpoint the student has the opportunity of using complete harmony and is immediately engaged in balancing the seduction of writing complete three voice chords against the demands of the melodic writing of the separate voices which frequently prevent that completeness.

However, the ideal of equal purity of line and harmony can be realized without writing a series of complete three voice chords and the key to this problem is careful doubling, which is directly related to the rules of importance of the degrees of the scale given in the General Rules, which we repeat: the degrees of the scale are ranged in importance in the following order: I - V - IV - II - VI - III. In other words, when obliged by the melodic writing to double a tone other than the conventional 6th in the chord of the 6th or the fundamental tone in a triad, the choice of the note to double must evolve upon the important degrees of the scale which reinforce the tonality.

A chord without its fifth is common enough but in counterpoint a chord with its fifth but not its third may also be used. We may state generally that when a chord without its third occurs on one of the principal degrees of the scale it will sound well. Such a chord may also sound well on the other degrees of the scale provided the open fifth is approached conjunctly in contrary motion.

None of this is too difficult if one observes the extremely tonal character of these exercises in which, in their brevity, the repetition of a chord in the same precise disposition, even when approached in an entirely different fashion and separated by seven or eight measures, stands out as redundant. This may not be at first apparent to the prejudiced ear of a student. The teacher must point it out.

NOTE AGAINST NOTE



This species is composed of a B.L. against which the student writes two other melodies in whole notes.

I BEGINNINGS AND ENDINGS

When the B.L. is in the lowest voice, the two upper voices may begin and end on the tonic, mediant, or dominant. When the B.L. is in any voice other than the lowest voice, the counterpoint in the bass **must** begin and end on the tonic.

II GOVERNING ELEMENTS

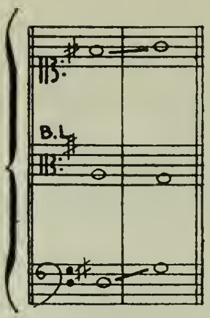
The student is referred to the corresponding section given for first species, two parts, the rules of which hold true in three parts with the addition of the elements of more complete harmony and the question of doubling mentioned in the introduction to the section on three part counterpoint.

III ELEMENTS THAT COULD CAUSE CONFUSION

A—HIDDEN OCTAVES AND FIFTHS ARE PROHIBITED BETWEEN THE TWO EXTREME VOICES.

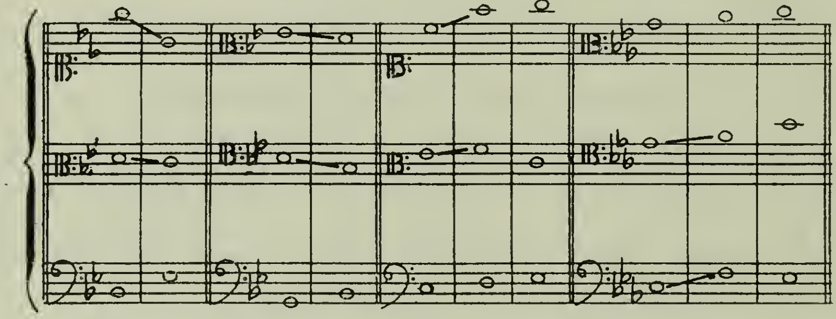
There is an exception to this rule, but only under the following very definite condition is it permissible:
Hidden octaves may be written between the extreme voices if **the highest voice ascends from the leading tone to the tonic.**

EXAMPLE:



B—Hidden octaves and fifths may be written between an inner and an outer voice at any time throughout the exercise, but in every case, one of the voices must approach the hidden octave or fifth in conjunct movement:

EXAMPLE:

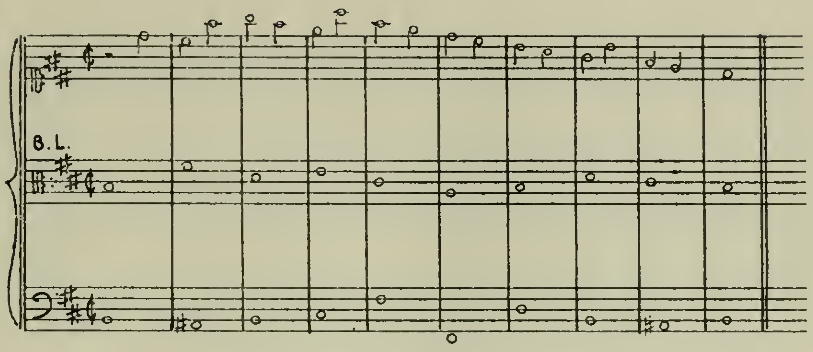


If the harmony moves to a chord of the sixth after the movement to the hidden octave or fifth, that hidden interval becomes much less obtrusive.

Note: In reference to this matter of handling octaves and fifths it must be stressed that octaves are much more difficult to manage in a musically satisfactory way than fifths. This will become more and more evident the longer the student works in this idiom.

EXERCISES: The student should satisfactorily complete 2 exercises with the B.L. in the lowest voice in both major and minor, 2 with the B.L. in the middle voice in both major and minor, and 2 with the B.L. in the highest voice in both major and minor.

TWO NOTES AGAINST ONE



This species is composed of a B.L. against which the student writes one counterpoint in half notes and one counterpoint in whole notes.

I BEGINNINGS AND ENDINGS

The part in half notes may begin (always after a half-note rest) and end on either the tonic, mediant, or the dominant. Of course, if the half-note voice is the lowest voice, it must, as in two parts, begin and end on the tonic. If the half-note voice is the lowest voice, the middle voice must begin on the tonic also. This amounts to the rule that:

> IF THE B.L. IS IN THE TOPMOST VOICE, ANY VOICE MOMENTARILY FORMING THE BASS MUST BEGIN ON THE TONIC.

This rule holds true throughout all the remaining species through eight parts.

II GOVERNING ELEMENTS

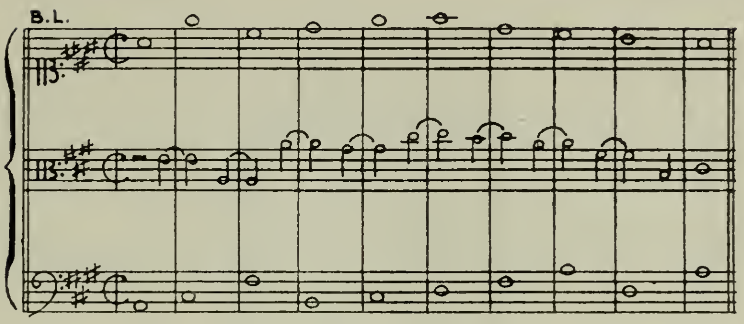
Refer to the corresponding section in two parts, second species.

III ELEMENTS THAT COULD CAUSE CONFUSION

Refer to the corresponding section in two parts, second species.

EXERCISES: From second species through fifth species the student should satisfactorily complete 2 exercises with the B.L. in the lowest voice alternating the other two voices in both major and minor, 2 with the B.L. in the middle voice, etc., and 2 with the B.L. in the highest voice, etc.

FOUR NOTES AGAINST ONE



This exampl
should be o
next page:
" SUSPENSION

This species is composed of a B.L. against which the student writes one counterpoint in quarter notes and one counterpoint in whole notes.

I BEGINNINGS AND ENDINGS

The part in quarter notes may begin (always after a quarter note rest) and end on either the tonic, mediant, or dominant. If the quarter note voice is in the lowest voice, it must begin and end on the tonic. And, as in the rule given in the section Beginnings and Endings for the preceding species, if the quarter note is the lowest voice, the middle voice must begin on the tonic.

II GOVERNING ELEMENTS

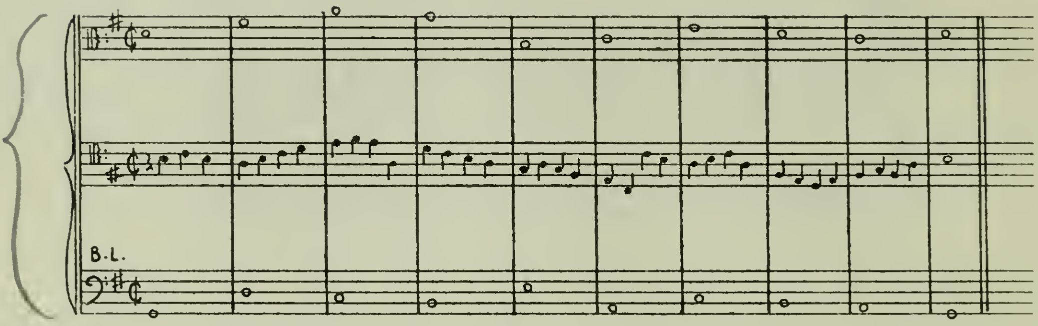
Refer to the corresponding section in two parts, third species.

III ELEMENTS THAT COULD CAUSE CONFUSION

Refer to the corresponding section in two parts, third species.

SUSPENSIONS

This example should be on page 41: "FOUR NOTES AGAINST ONE"



This species is composed of a B.L. against which the student writes one counterpoint in suspensions and one counterpoint in whole notes.

I BEGINNINGS AND ENDINGS

Refer to the preceding species.

II GOVERNING ELEMENTS

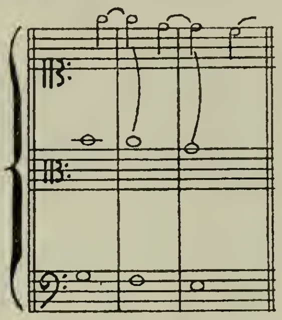
Refer to the corresponding section given in fourth species, two parts, and to the rules given so far in three parts.

III ELEMENTS THAT COULD CAUSE CONFUSION

A—Refer to the corresponding section in fourth species, two parts, and to the rules given so far in three parts.

B—Since the chordal note in this species sounds on the second beat of the measure, fifths may occur on the first beat of successive measures when employed in the following manner:

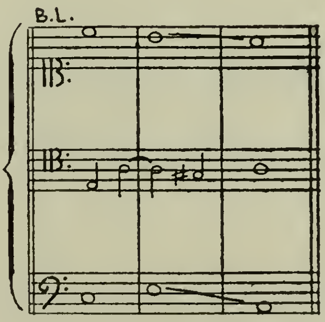
EXAMPLE:



This 5-4 relationship between the soprano and contralto is possible in counterpoint in three parts, but at all times the relationship of the suspension to the bass must be one of those given in section II, letter A of fourth species, two parts.

C—In order to avoid approaching the unison from the same direction when the suspensions are in the middle voice, hidden octaves are permitted between the extreme voices descending in the final measure.

EXAMPLE:



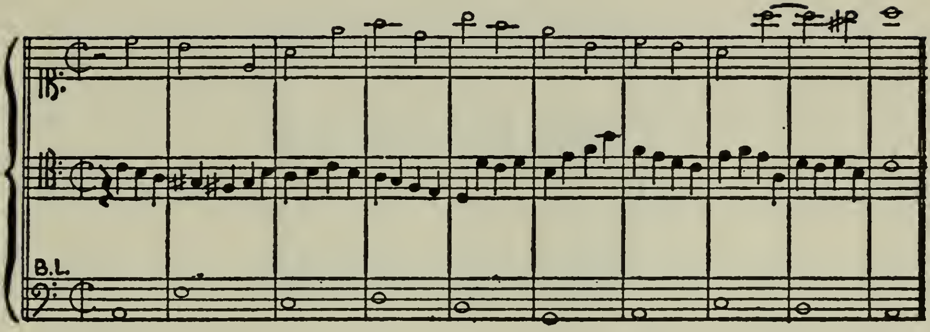
THE MELANGE

With this, the first melange or combination of species, the student encounters a new element. This element, the possibility of employing an increased number of logical dissonances that result from passing notes and embellishments is the consequence of the combining of rhythmically individual species.

This rhythmic individuality reinforces the integrity of each part but the real difficulty of the melange is to maintain an equal purity of character and balance of quality in the different voices when combined. In other words, the quality of one voice should not be sacrificed to the advantage of another.

All the rules pertaining to the different species prevail when used in the melange but the advantage of the combinations are best exploited by stressing conjunct and contrary motion. It is the key to proper employment of the dissonances provided by passing notes and embellishments that gives to the melange the richness which is its chief characteristic. It renders practical, in short, encounters that would otherwise be too harsh.

MELANGE NO. 1



This melange consists of the combination of whole, half, and quarter note species.

I BEGINNINGS AND ENDINGS

A—When the B.L. is in the bass the upper voice may begin on the unison, octave, third or fifth. When the B.L. is in either the middle or the topmost voice the counterpoint in the lowest voice must begin on the tonic.

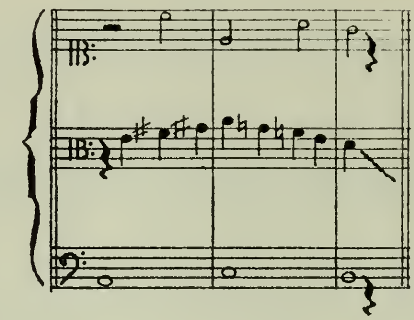
B—When the B.L. is in the bass the upper voice may end on the unison, octave, third or fifth but the termination on the third, the least definite, should not be employed too often. When the B.L. is in one of the upper voices the lowest voice must end on the tonic.

Note: Since the melange is a true combination, no modification, rhythmic or otherwise, of the species is permitted and naturally the openings retain their characteristic contours as in the example above.

II GOVERNING ELEMENTS

Whenever possible, in a minor exercise, the beginnings and endings should demonstrate the key and mode. This can be done without brusqueness as in the following example but this beginning would not be practical without a return to the minor mode, either at the end or during the course of the exercise.

EXAMPLE:

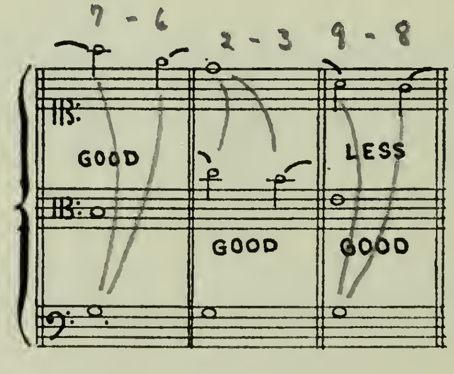


III ELEMENTS THAT COULD CAUSE CONFUSION

It is not possible to classify all the possible encounters that could occur in the course of an exercise but one important observation may be made:

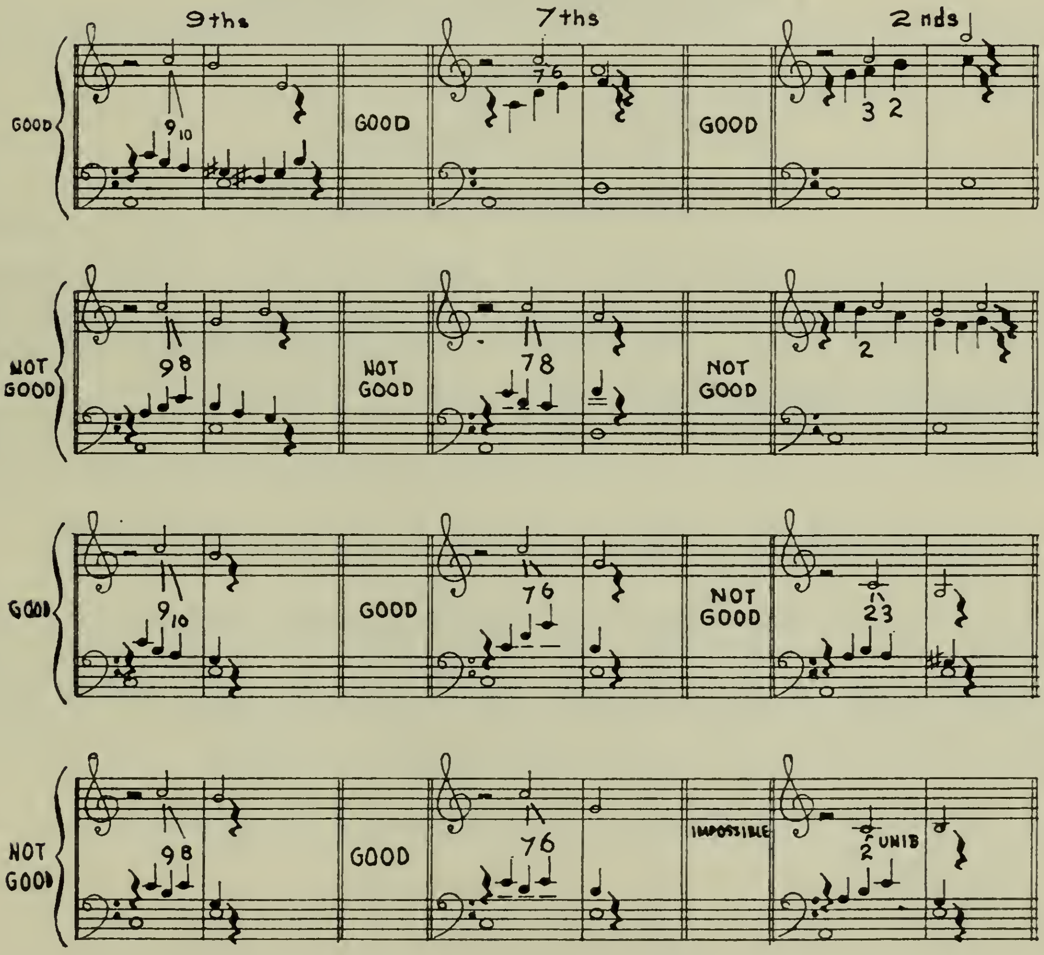
> The movement from a ninth or seventh is good when the next movement produces a tenth in the case of the ninth and sixth in the case of a seventh. In other words, when one of the notes of a seventh or ninth rises or descends to the note it is dissonant with it is less good. This is obviously related to the rule that one may not approach the unison from a second and inversely becomes more practical the greater the distance between the voices. It is also related to the obvious fact that a dissonant suspension that resolves to form an octave is less rich than a suspension that resolves to a third.

EXAMPLE:

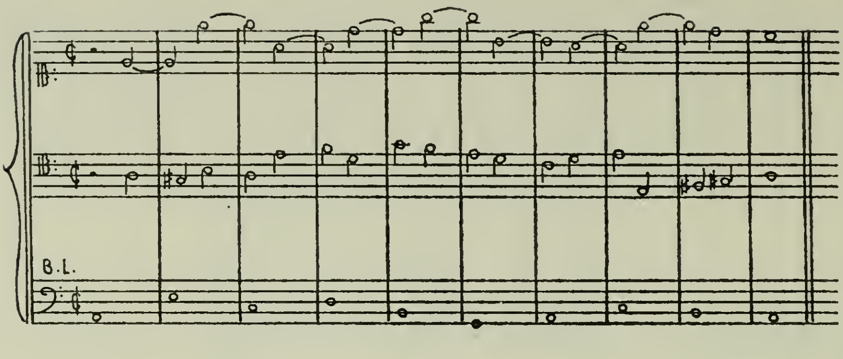


The following table illustrates the rule given above but since all the examples are of beginnings—the most exposed part of an exercise—they do not illustrate encounters that are possible once the movement of an exercise is underway. These would be impossible to categorize and in any case it would not be desirable to do so. One does not choose a felicitous encounter and work around it; one discovers them in the course of realizing an exercise.

EXAMPLE:



MELANGE NO. II



This melange is composed of a combination of whole, half, and suspension species.

I BEGINNINGS AND ENDINGS

Refer to the rules given for Melange No. 1.

II GOVERNING ELEMENTS

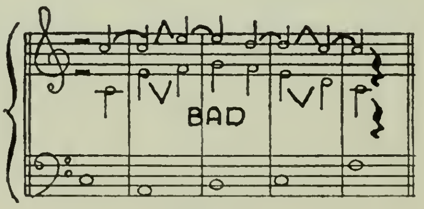
This melange is certainly the most difficult and for a good reason: one cannot have a perfect line in half notes with an equally good line in retards. The real difficulty is the apportioning of the truly contrapuntal movements between the two species in a manner that effects a satisfactory whole.

III ELEMENTS THAT COULD CAUSE CONFUSION

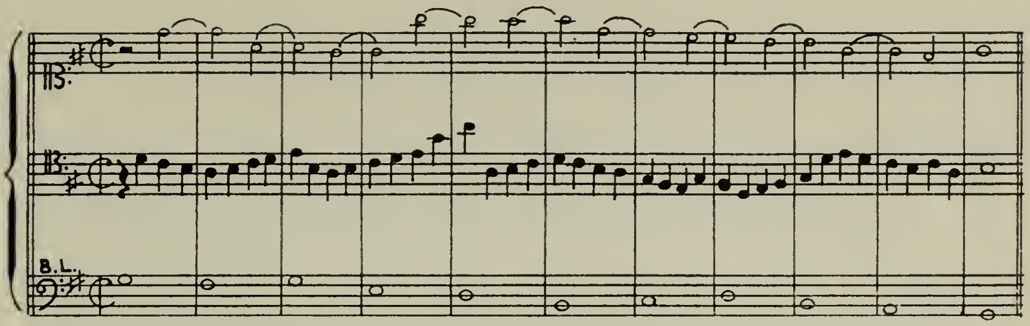
In the previous melange the relatively rapid movement of the quarter notes ameliorated the harshness of the dissonances encountered but in this melange the half notes and retards move simultaneously on the second beat of each measure, a movement that, by its slower pace, demands careful writing.

The following is an example of what one should not do:

EXAMPLE:



MELANGE NO. III



This melange consists of the combination of whole, quarter, and suspension species.

I BEGINNINGS AND ENDINGS

Refer to the rules given for Melange No. 1.

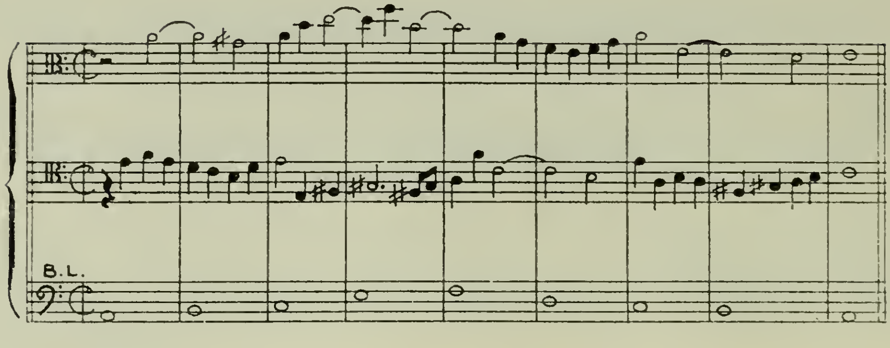
II GOVERNING ELEMENTS

Refer to the rules given for Melange No. 1.

III ELEMENTS THAT COULD CAUSE CONFUSION

Since the quarter note species is employed in this melange, more dissonances are possible, but the corresponding section of Melange No. 1 obviously must be kept in mind.

FLORID COUNTERPOINT

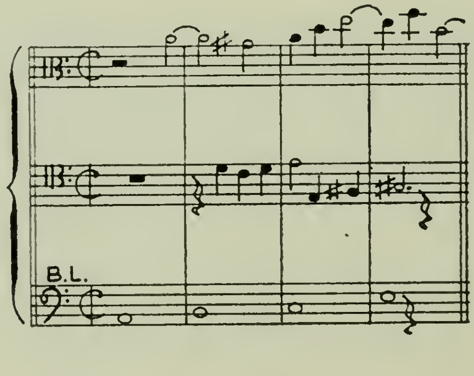


This species is composed of a B.L. against which the student writes two melodies in florid counterpoint.

I BEGINNINGS AND ENDINGS

The beginnings are the same rhythmically as those given for two part, but the third voice can, if it is desired, enter in the second measure. Of course the note on which this voice enters will then be determined by the chord of that measure. This voice may enter on either the fundamental, third, or fifth of the governing chord. The endings remain the same as the endings throughout three part.

EXAMPLE:



II GOVERNING ELEMENTS

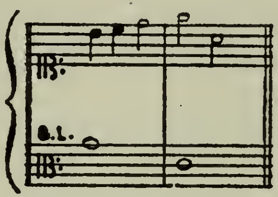
Refer to the corresponding section in two part, fifth species.

III ELEMENTS THAT COULD CAUSE CONFUSION

A—Refer to the corresponding section in two part, fifth species.

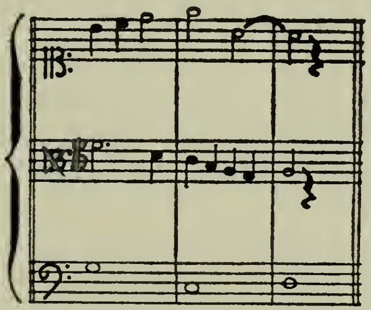
B—When two voices are written in florid counterpoint, the awkward transition from quarter to half note movement mentioned in two part may be overcome by the complimentary movement of the second florid voice. A passage such as the following:

EXAMPLE:



is corrected and becomes very acceptable when the second voice fills in the necessary movement:

EXAMPLE:



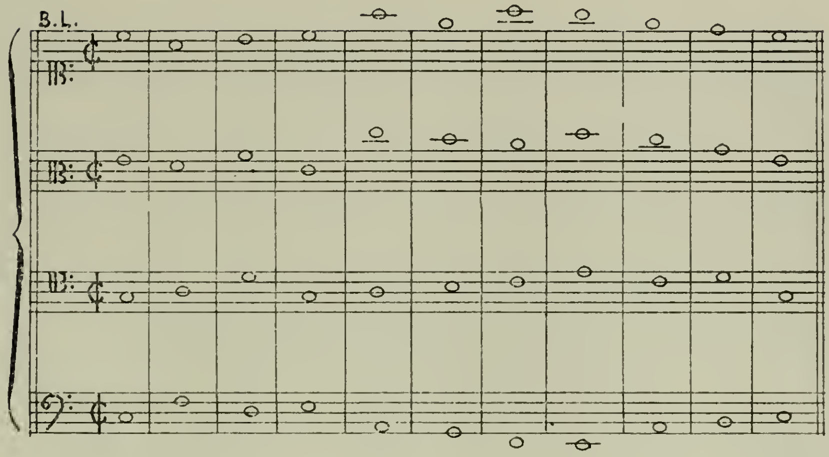
(Tenor clef)

FOUR PART COUNTERPOINT

In theory, three part writing is the ideal in tonal counterpoint since a triad contains only three tones, but in practice this is not true since the demands of counterpoint are often at odds with the demands of harmony and in four voice counterpoint it is always possible to complete the harmony without endangering the character of the individual lines.

There is no relaxation of any of the previous rules. The four part species lead to the Classical Melange—the ideal in pure species counterpoint—in which all four species are combined into one exercise.

NOTE AGAINST NOTE



This species is composed of a B.L. against which the student writes three other melodies in whole notes.

I BEGINNINGS AND ENDINGS

When the B.L. is in the lowest voice, the three upper voices may begin and end on either the tonic, mediant, or dominant. The bass must at all times begin and end on the tonic.

II GOVERNING ELEMENTS

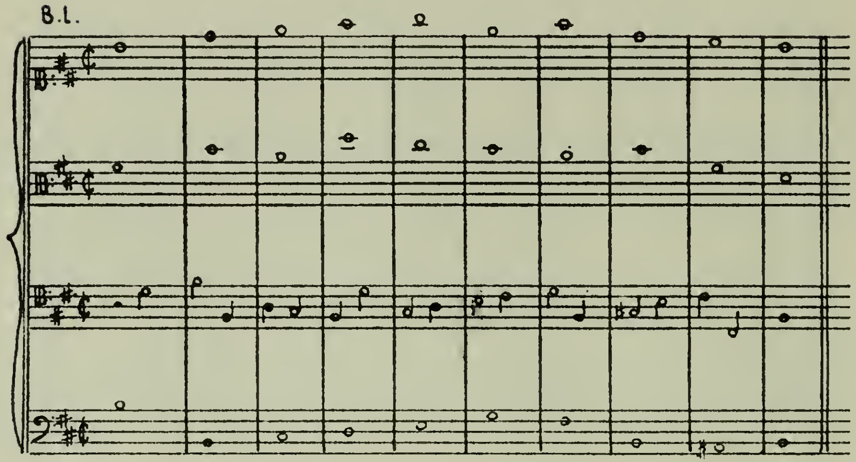
Refer to the corresponding sections given for first species, two and three parts.

III ELEMENTS THAT COULD CAUSE CONFUSION

Refer to the corresponding sections in two and three parts.

EXERCISES: The student should satisfactorily complete one exercise with the B.L. in each of the four voices.

TWO NOTES AGAINST ONE



This species is composed of a B.L. against which the student writes two voices in whole notes and one voice in half notes.

I BEGINNINGS AND ENDINGS

Refer to the corresponding section in two and three parts.

II GOVERNING ELEMENTS

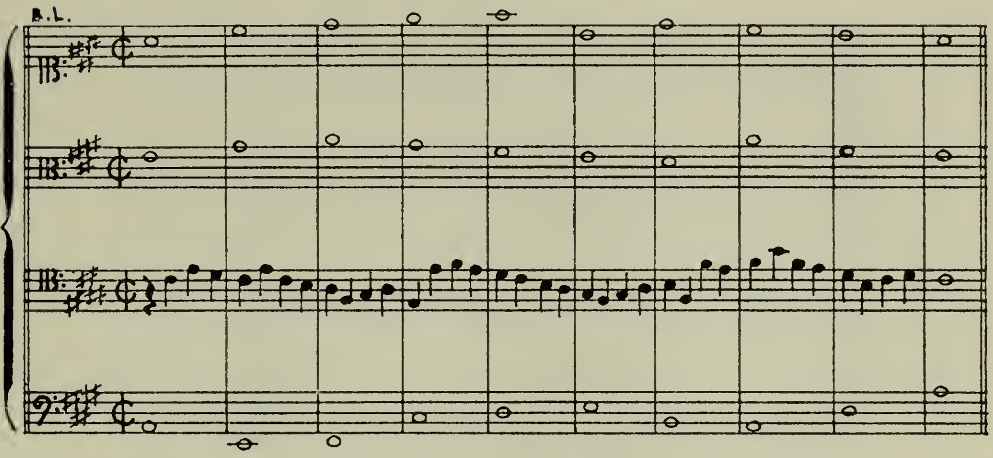
Refer to the corresponding section in two and three parts.

III ELEMENTS THAT COULD CAUSE CONFUSION

Refer to the corresponding section in two and three parts.

EXERCISES: From second species through fourth species the student should place the B.L. three times in each part in both major and minor, alternating the voice of the moving part.

FOUR NOTES AGAINST ONE



This species is composed of a B.L. against which the student writes two voices in whole notes and one voice in quarter notes.

I BEGINNINGS AND ENDINGS

Refer to the corresponding section in two and three parts.

II GOVERNING ELEMENTS

Refer to the corresponding section in two and three parts.

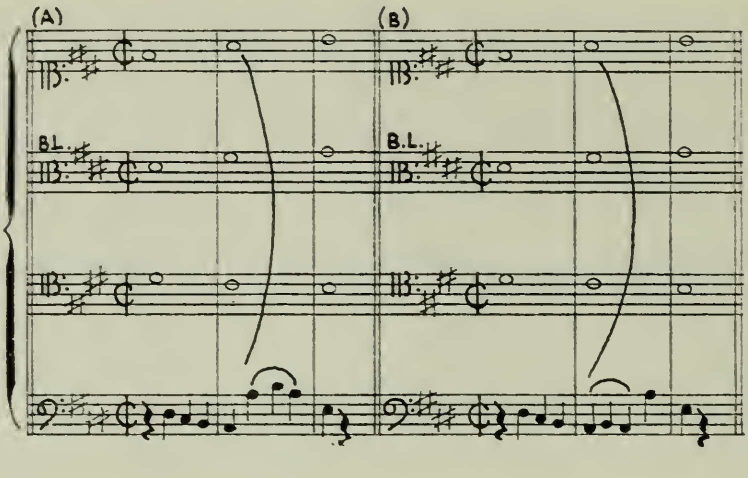
III ELEMENTS THAT COULD CAUSE CONFUSION

A—Refer to the corresponding section in two and three parts.

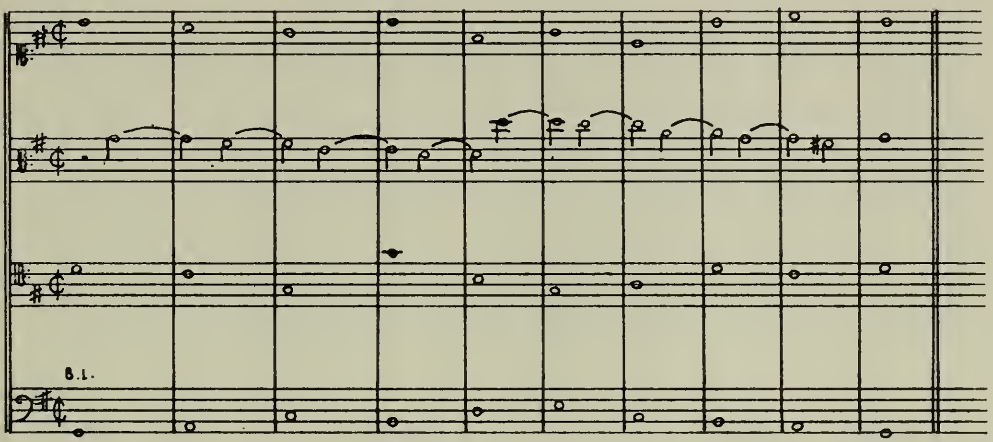
B—In section III-A, of third species in two parts, it was pointed out that it was forbidden to embellish the octave below. This rule must always be kept in mind, but when writing in four parts, and especially when the quarter note voice is in the bass, it becomes a practical necessity to embellish the octave below. However, the embellishment beginning on the weak beat (example A, next page) sounds better because the embellishment note occurs on the second beat, therefore emphasizing the dissonance, and also because this rhythmic form implies a fresh entrance of the voice.

Example B, below, however, emphasizes the note embellished and gives the impression of "walking in place".

EXAMPLE:



SUSPENSIONS



This species is composed of a B.L. against which the student writes two voices in whole notes and one voice in suspensions.

I BEGINNINGS AND ENDINGS

Refer to the corresponding section in two and three parts.

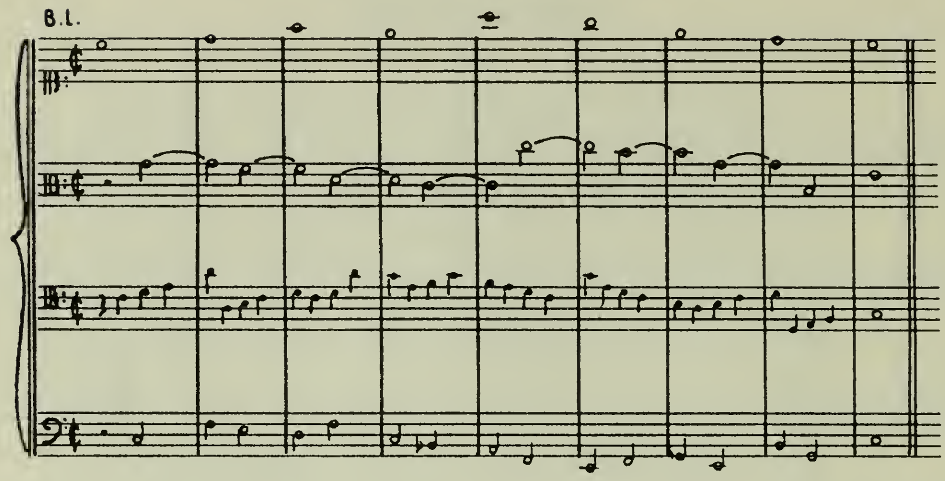
II GOVERNING ELEMENTS

Refer to the corresponding section in two and three parts.

III ELEMENTS THAT COULD CAUSE CONFUSION

Refer to the corresponding section in two and three parts.

THE CLASSICAL MELANGE



This melange consists of the combination of the whole, half, quarter note, and suspension species. It is by far the most rewarding (and the most difficult) of the combinations possible in this theory because of the opportunities it affords for achieving a flawless balance of all the elements.

I BEGINNINGS AND ENDINGS

Refer to the rules given for Melange No. 1, three part counterpoint.

II GOVERNING ELEMENTS

Refer to the corresponding section of Melange No. 1, three part counterpoint.

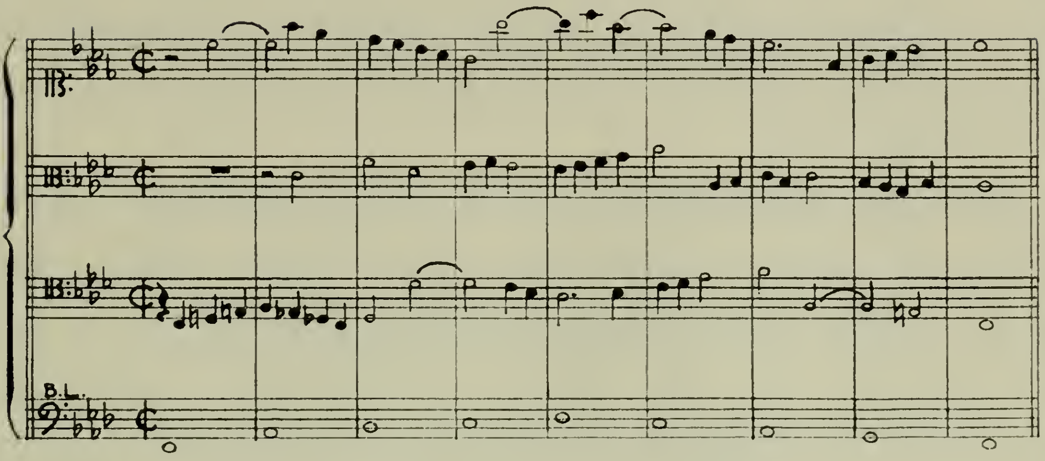
III ELEMENTS THAT COULD CAUSE CONFUSION

There is nothing new to discuss in this section except to note that more dissonant encounters will prove possible because of the addition of the fourth voice.

This four part melange may at first seem slightly crowded to the student. Therefore, he is reminded again that the voices must remain in reasonable registers.

EXERCISES: The student should satisfactorily complete one exercise with the B.L. in each of the four voices.

FLORID COUNTERPOINT



This species is composed of a B.L. against which the student writes three melodies in florid counterpoint.

I BEGINNINGS AND ENDINGS

Refer to the rules given in the corresponding section of fifth species, three parts.

II GOVERNING ELEMENTS

Refer to the corresponding section in three part, fifth species.

III ELEMENTS THAT COULD CAUSE CONFUSION

Refer to the corresponding section in three part, fifth species.

COUNTERPOINT IN MORE THAN FOUR PARTS

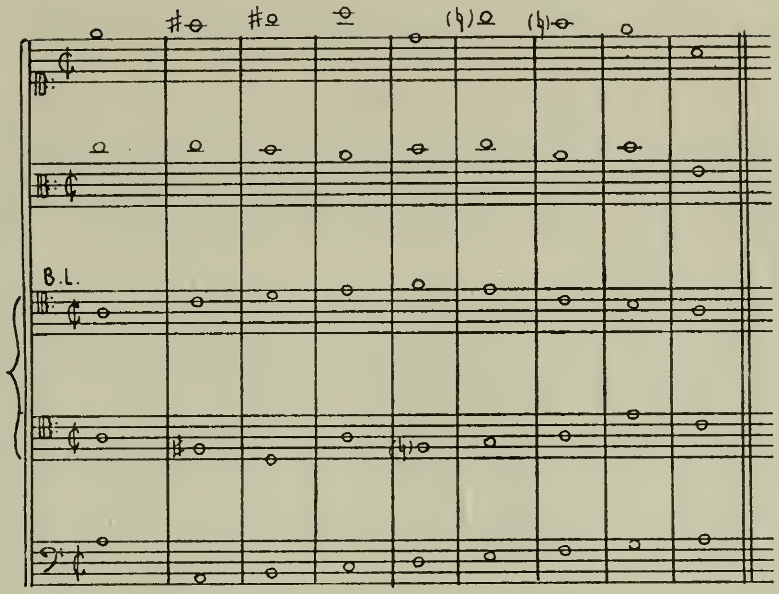
It may perhaps be felt that with the completion of four part writing the field of counterpoint has been sufficiently covered. It is true that all essential principles have been dealth with, but it is also true that the complete study of counterpoint, as it is taught in France, Germany and Italy, continues through eight parts which is followed by the Double Choir, Imitation, and then Fugue. Therefore, when the study is viewed in its entirety, two, three, and four part counterpoint becomes the foundation for the study of the remaining approximately two-thirds of the whole contrapuntal study.

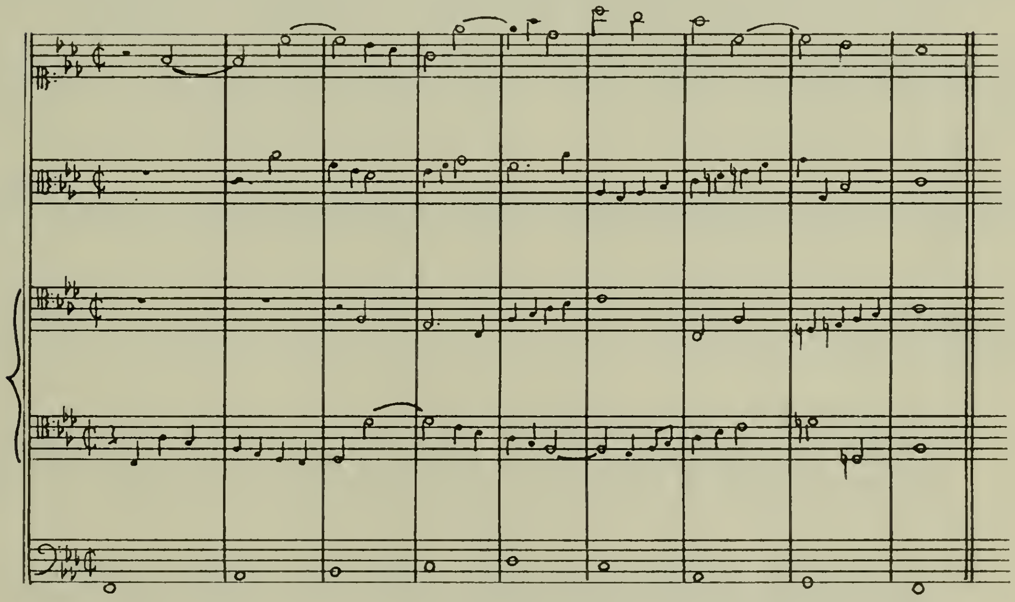
Since all of the essential rules have been covered in two through four part counterpoint, the indications given for five through eight parts will be in the form of licenses which become necessary in order to realize the exercises with the added voices. But the student should always remember that license is a deviation from strict rule which must be justified by the necessity of the situation—in this case adding the necessary freedom which will enable the voices to maintain their individuality. License should never be considered as the ground rules or working plan for the exercises. The rules previously given for two through four part counterpoint remain in effect, their relaxation or license can only be judged valid if the total effect produced in the exercise in which they are used is musically sound.

The important contrapuntal principle of successive voice entries facilitates greatly the realization of the fifth species exercises in many voices. In an exercise in eight parts, for example, when a Basic Line of only nine measures is used, there could be only three measures of eight part writing. This should not be interpreted as an absolute rule that no two voices can enter in the same measure, it simply means that separate entries are theoretically possible in each of the first seven measures of an eight part exercise. The subtle use of successive entries is an important factor in determining the musicality of an exercise.

However, the use of successive entries immediately invokes the rule that **the precise licenses permitted will always be determined by the number of voices written in any given measure.** When four voices are being written, all the rules for four part writing must be observed; when five voices are being written, only the licenses allowed for five part writing will be permitted, etc.

EXERCISES: In five, six, seven, and eight part counterpoint, the student will write exercises in only the first and fifth species placing the Basic Line once in the topmost voice, once in the most central voice, and once in the lowest voice. Therefore, in both major and minor, there will be six exercises, three in first species and three in fifth species.





The student will find that the five part combination is a very interesting and fruitful one, and also that there will not be a great necessity to use the licenses permitted in five part writing.

LICENSES:

1. In the exercises in first species, a note may be repeated, i.e., written twice in succession in the same voice.

2. Successive fifths and octaves may be used (even if the second is approached or left in disjunct movement) when separated by two or three quarter notes, or an equivalent time value when using other than quarter notes, provided the second fifth or octave does not fall on the first beat of a measure.

3. Except for the first measure, crossing of voices is possible **including the last measure.** Since two of the voices will be written in the same clef, it is more reasonable that if any voices are crossed in the last measure the best crossing, from the point of view of voice texture, would be the two voices of the same range. However, it is not permissible to cross the soprano or bass in the last measure unless there happens to be either two sopranos or two basses in which case the two voices of equal range may be crossed in the final measure. In other words, it is not permissible to have an alto as the top voice or a tenor as the lowest voice in the final measure.

oint not joint)

4. In the fith species exercises a whole note may be used in the florid voices but this is rarely necessary in five part and should be avoided if possible.

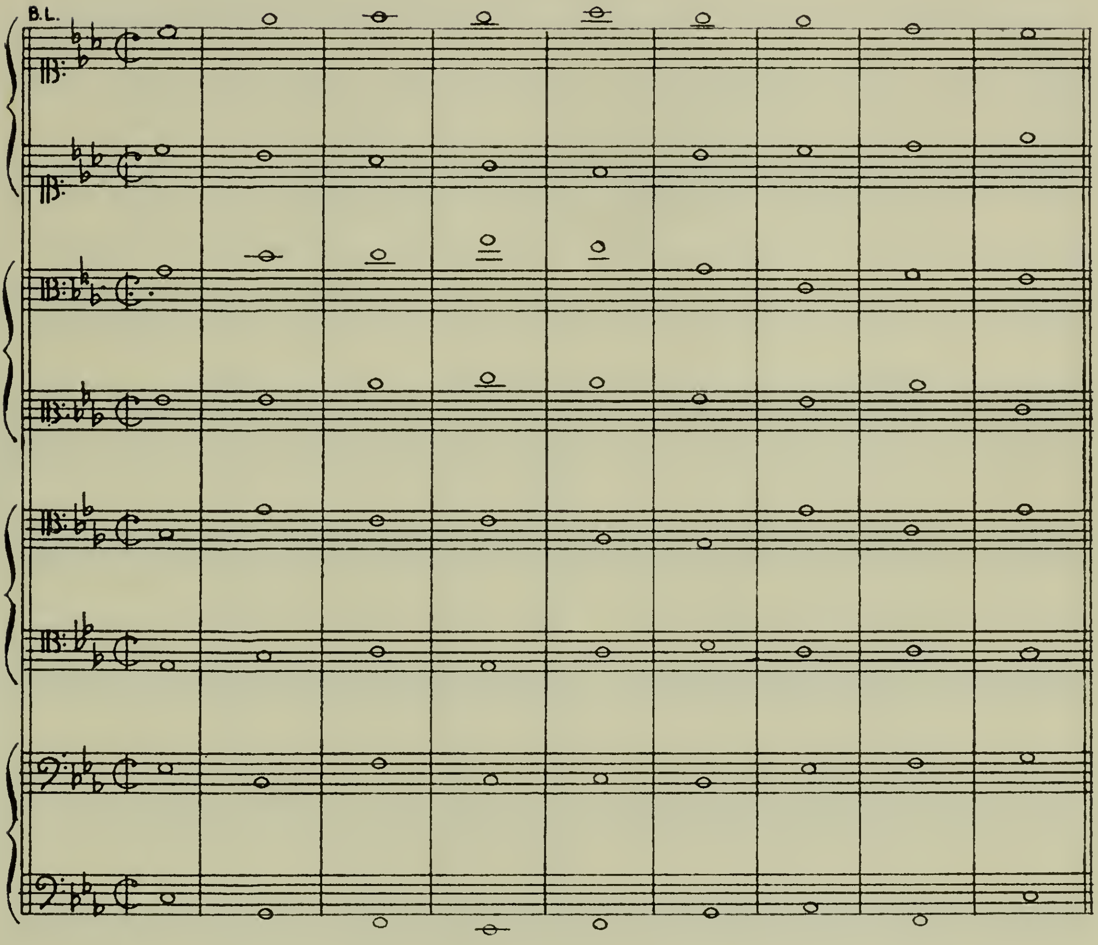
SIX PART COUNTERPOINT

LICENSES:

1. Except for the extreme voices, successive fifths and octaves are permitted no matter what time value separated them provided they are approached by contrary motion.

2. With the exception of the extreme voices, hidden fifths and octaves are permitted even if both voices move to them through disjunct motion.

3. The unison is permitted throughout provided it is approached by oblique or contrary motion. This does not alter the original rule that a unison must be approached through disjunct movement.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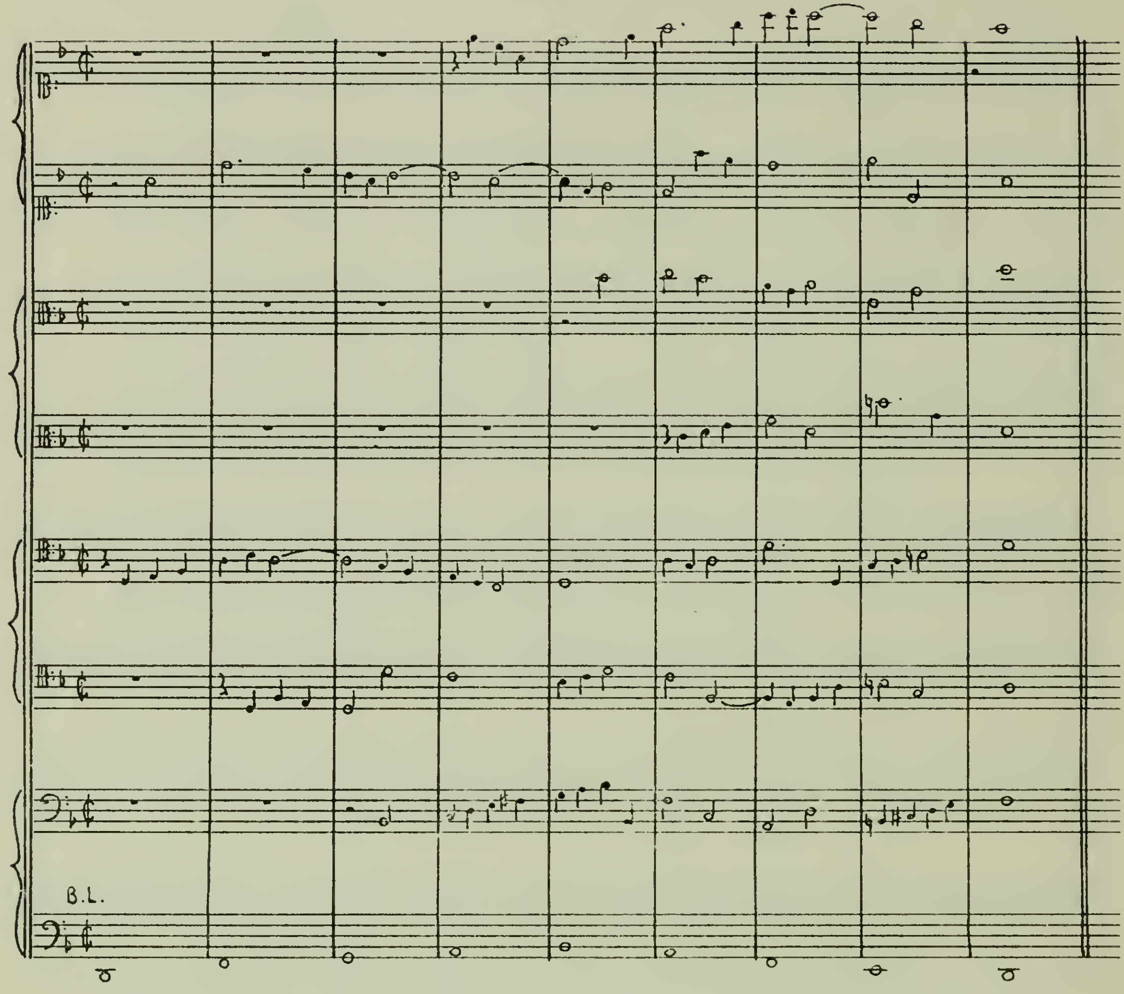
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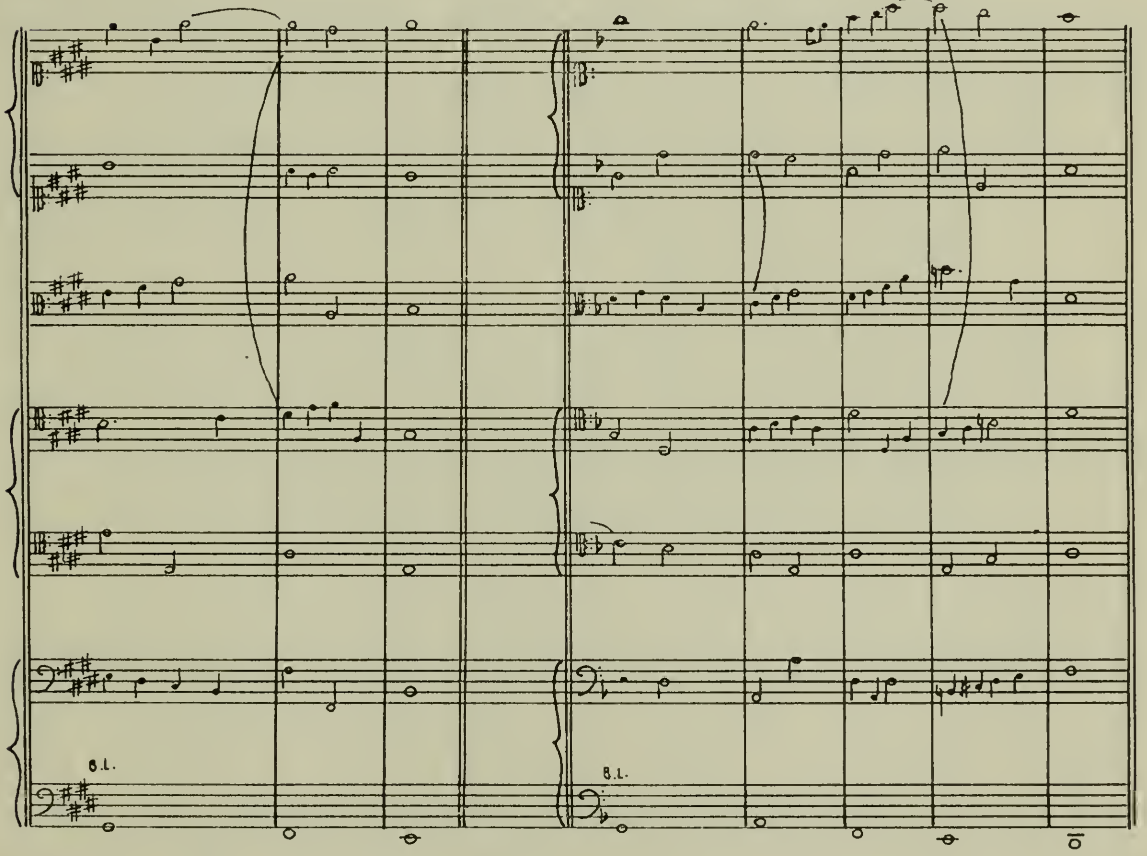
LICENSES:

1. Successive octaves and fifths may be written between any two voices **including the extremes** when approached through contrary motion.
2. Hidden fifths are permitted between the extreme voices when the upper voice moves stepwise but only if the fifth occurs on one of the principle triads.
3. The hidden octave is permitted between the extreme parts both ascending and descending to the tonic in the final measure.
4. The resolution note and the suspension may be written at the same time even if the resolution note is in other than the lowest voice provided there is a distance of a ninth between the two voices and the combination is approached through conjunct oblique movement.

EXAMPLE:



5. The interval of a major sixth may be utilized if it is well placed and produces a satisfactory melodic effect within the voice in which it occurs.

THE DOUBLE CHOIR

This is a rather hybrid style of composition the study of which, traditionally, in France, is placed between eight part counterpoint and imitation, which leads to the study of fugue.

Following as it does the study of pure counterpoint, it often appears to contain many anomalies such as the frequent use of modulation, incipient imitation and harmonic sequences, but there are excellent reasons for so placing it:

FIRST: The student has been working within the most rigid boundaries, boundaries that at first were very irksome but which, with proficiency, grew to be comfortable. This acceptance of control which can lead to the feeling that one must sooner or later arrive at a contrapuntal Nirvana must be dispelled. Counterpoint is a compositional technique that should be assimilated into freely formal music and the double choir is a step toward this end.

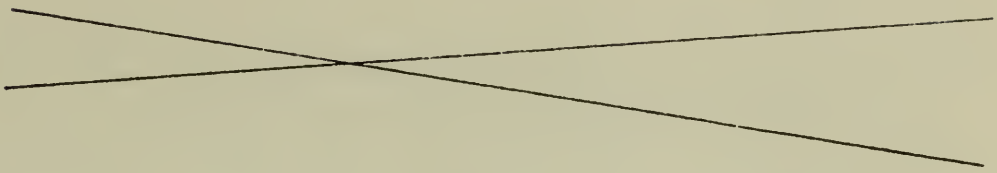
SECOND: The student has just completed writing eight part exercises and the special technique of writing for eight melodic voices immediately pertains to the tutti sections of the double choir.

Note: Modulation, rudimentary imitation, and harmonic sequences should have been covered in the study of harmony which the student is assumed to have completed. In the case of students who are studying harmony and counterpoint simultaneously, a review of the above devices as used in harmony would be helpful.

Notwithstanding the fact that the student works with a given bass which determines the length of the composition and the placing of the tuttis, the new element is the formal. This must be attained by melodic cohesiveness and a dynamic plan and by the latter we do not mean dynamic marking but rather the constructing and placing of climaxes through what could be called choral orchestration.

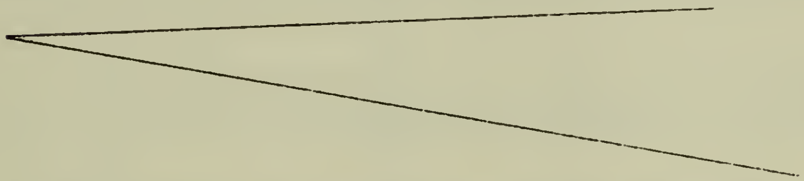
The following graphs illustrate some logical plans:

A –



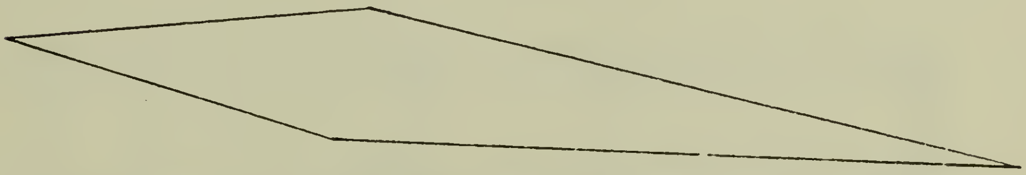
With this simple graphic picture is shown the formal outline of a double choir. In the above plan the choir begins at a medium intensity, descends to relative calmness and then begins its ascent to the final climax at the end.

B –



This outline is self evident, but in such a plan, the student must remember that the composition must be short for the obvious reason that a continual climax can only be achieved for a limited time.

C –



This outline is the opposite of the first plan and quite a bit more difficult since in most given basses the choir ends with all eight voices singing.

The student is not advised to begin his double choir with one of these three forms definitely in mind. There are countless possible variants to these basic plans and are given simply as general formal outlines.

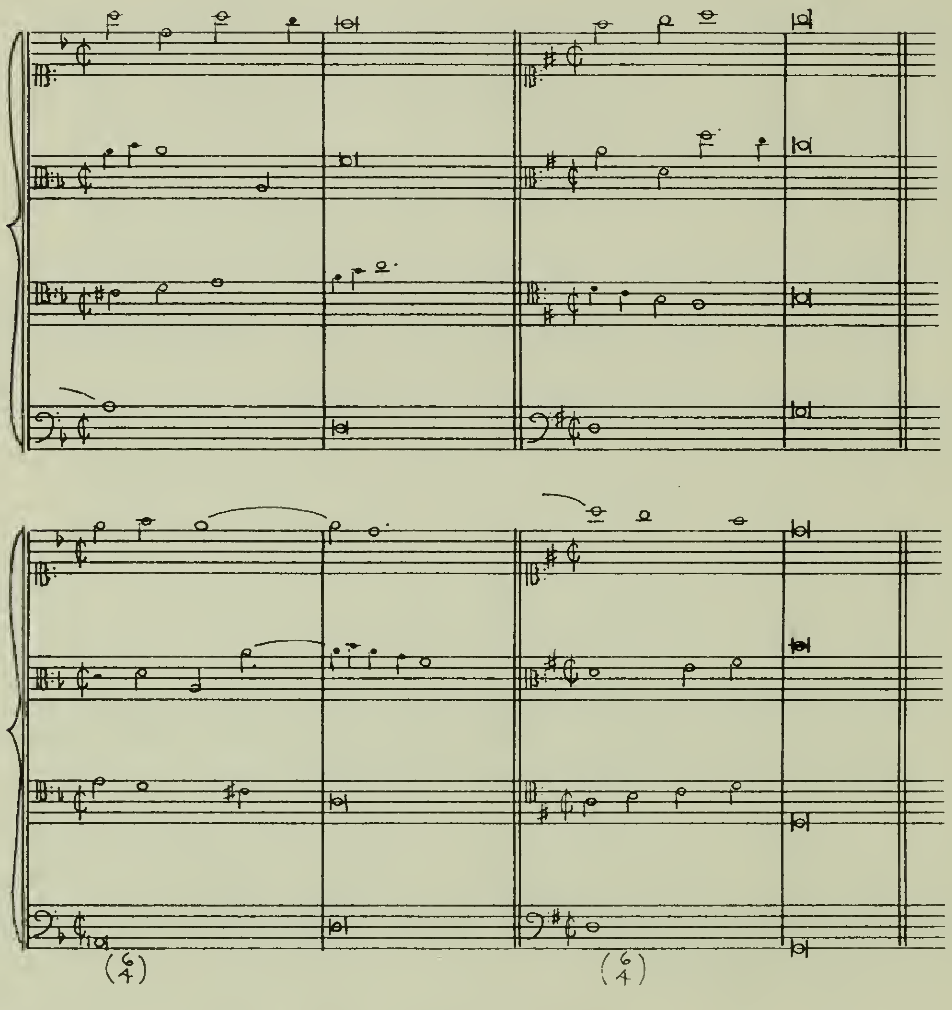
I BEGINNINGS AND ENDINGS

A—It is not possible to formulate absolute rules for the commencement of the double choirs since the given basses are the determining factors. Depending on the bass it is possible to begin with from one to eight voices and while successive entries of the voices are characteristically contrapuntal it is often effective to begin with one choir (4 voices) or both (8 voices).

B—The endings will be determined by the same rules that govern the endings of the eight part florid exercises.

There is a traditional element in the cadential sequence which includes the use of the 6/4 chord in the final measures of the double choir.

EXAMPLE:



II GOVERNING ELEMENTS

A—When in four parts the rules for four part counterpoint apply.

B—When in five, six, seven, or eight parts, the rules for five, etc.

III ELEMENTS THAT COULD CAUSE CONFUSION

A—If a given bass is written in 4/2 time, one can consider one measure the equivalent of two measures of 2/2 time, and therefore all of our previous study can be valid in terms of the number of chords per measure. However, in 4/2 time (and this is a delicate point) the third beat, which in general is considered a consonant beat, has less accent than the first and passing notes and embellishments may be used on it. On the other hand, it is permissible when writing double choirs to have a change of chord on each beat.

B—In 3/2 time (which the student hasn't encountered before in the rigorous counterpoint), there may be one, two, or three chords per measure. If the measure is governed by one chord, there may be passing tones on the remaining two beats. All this is determined by the movement of the given basses.

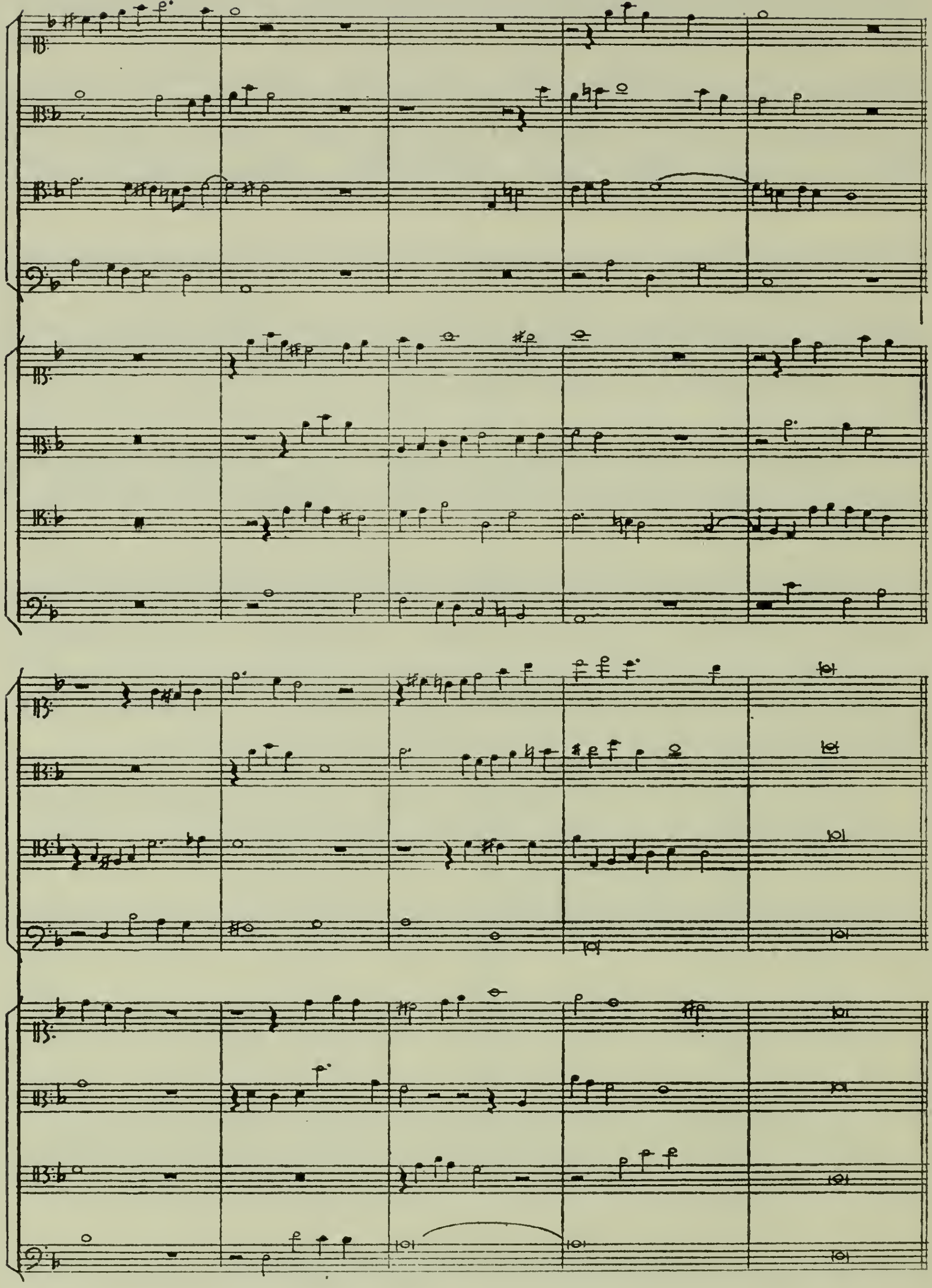
C—The danger in this species is that with several chords per measure permitted the harmonic is likely to dominate the contrapuntal.

TO THE EXTENT THAT ONE USES FEWER CHORDS AND MORE PASSING NOTES, THE DANGER IS MINIMIZED.

In this way the separate voices assume a more self-determined and therefore contrapuntal nature.

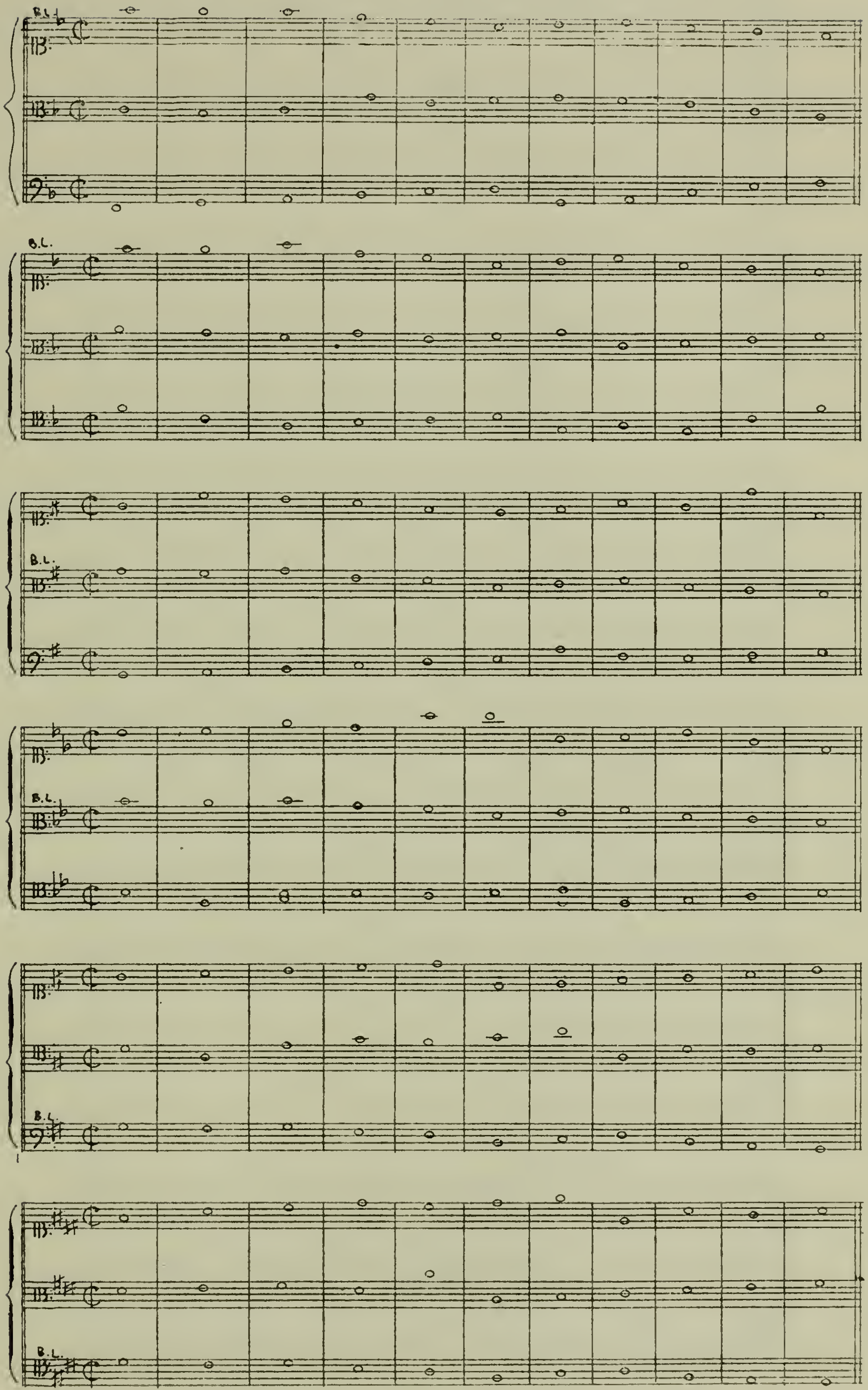
Beginning of Double Choir example should
start here
↓

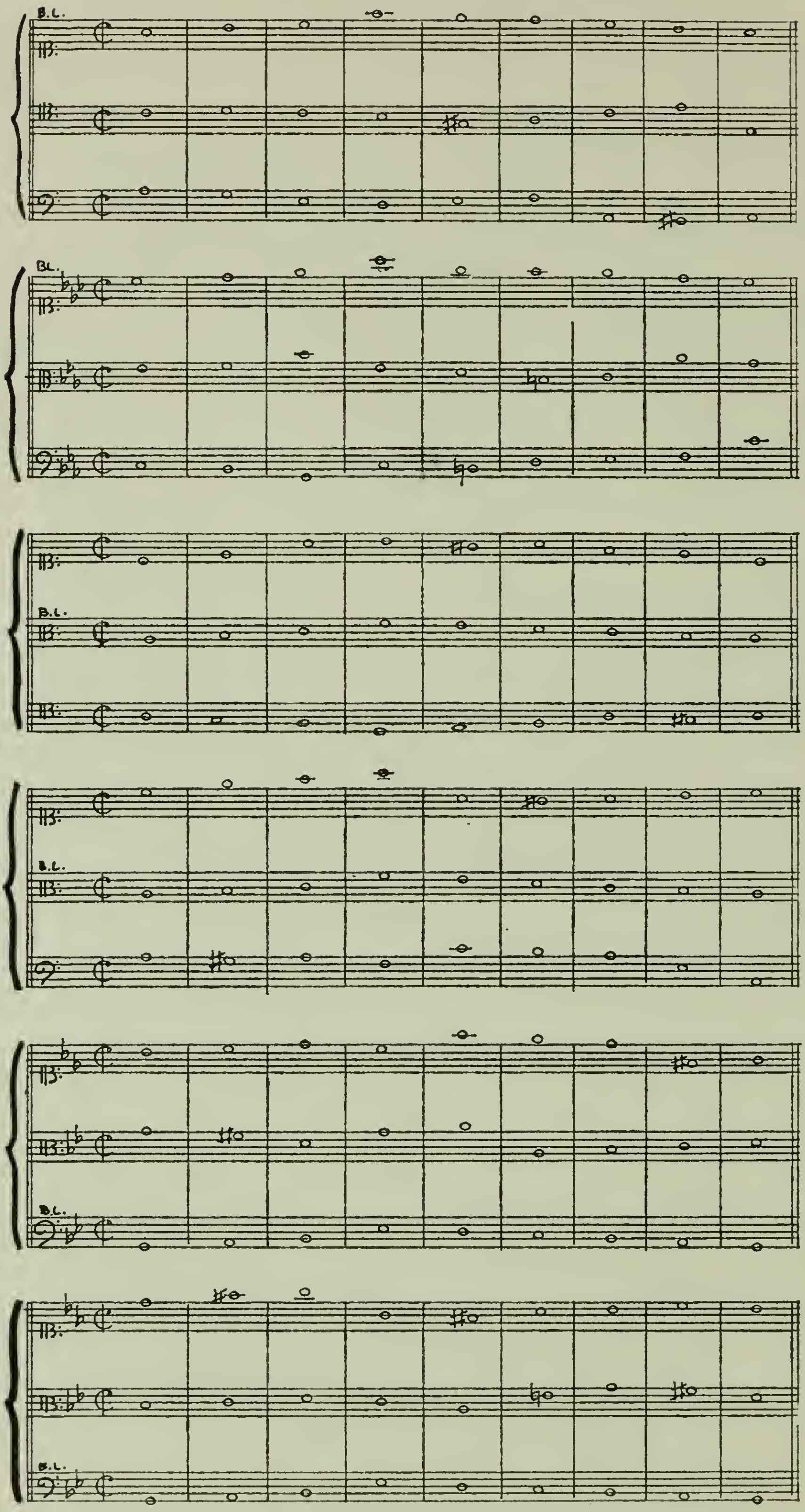
DOUBLE CHOIR



EXAMPLES

FIRST SPECIES—3 PARTS—MAJOR

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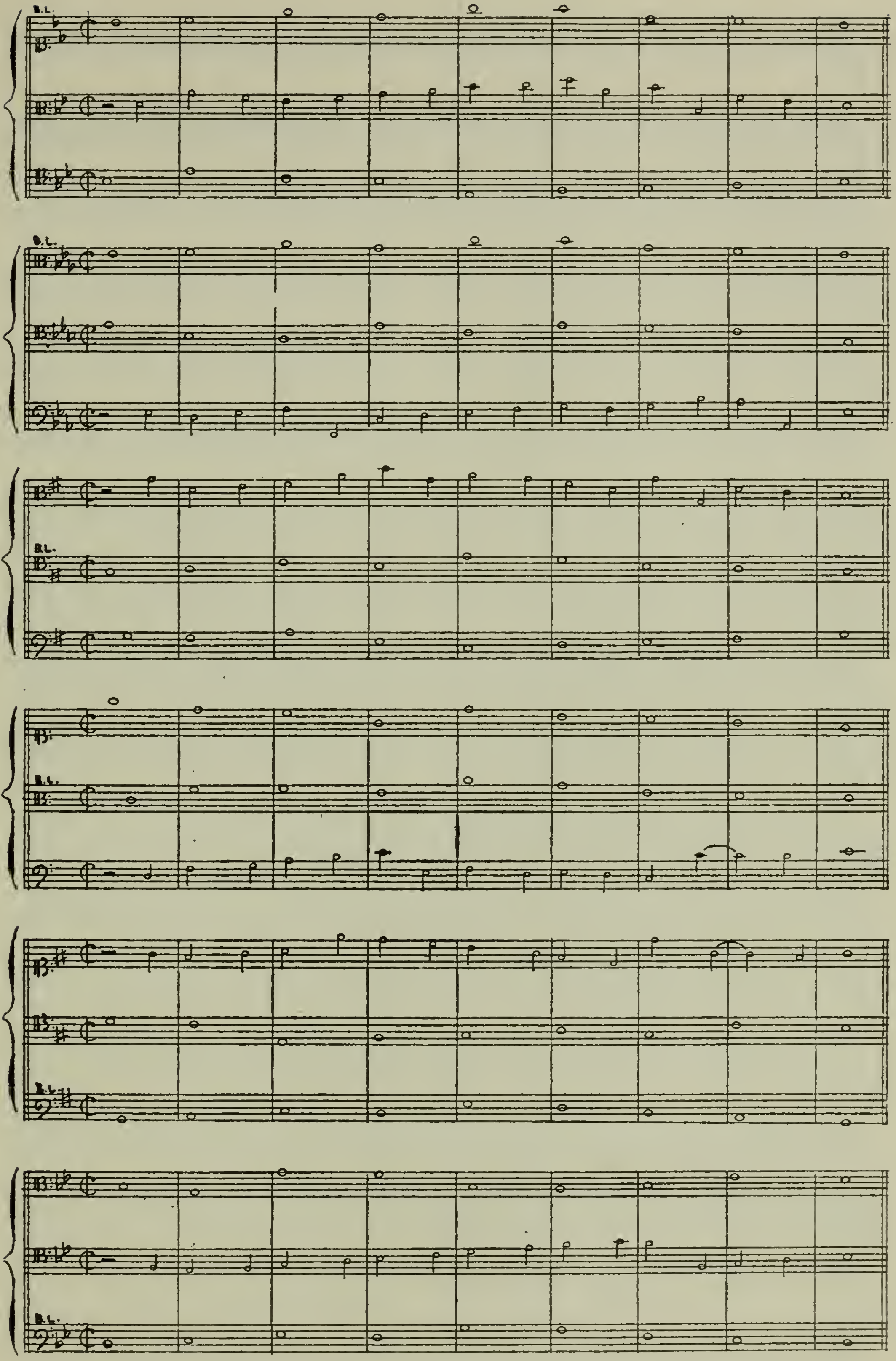
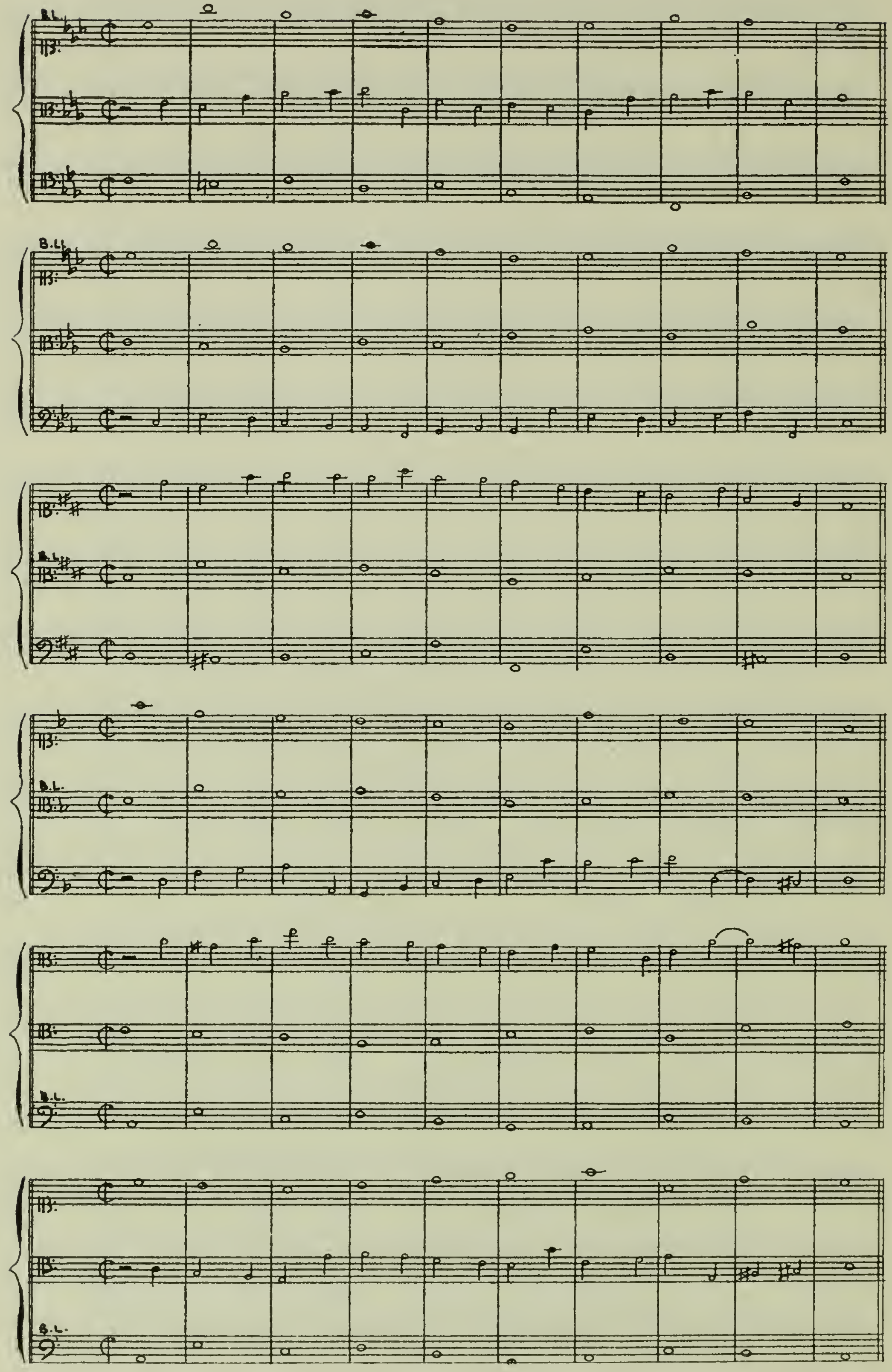
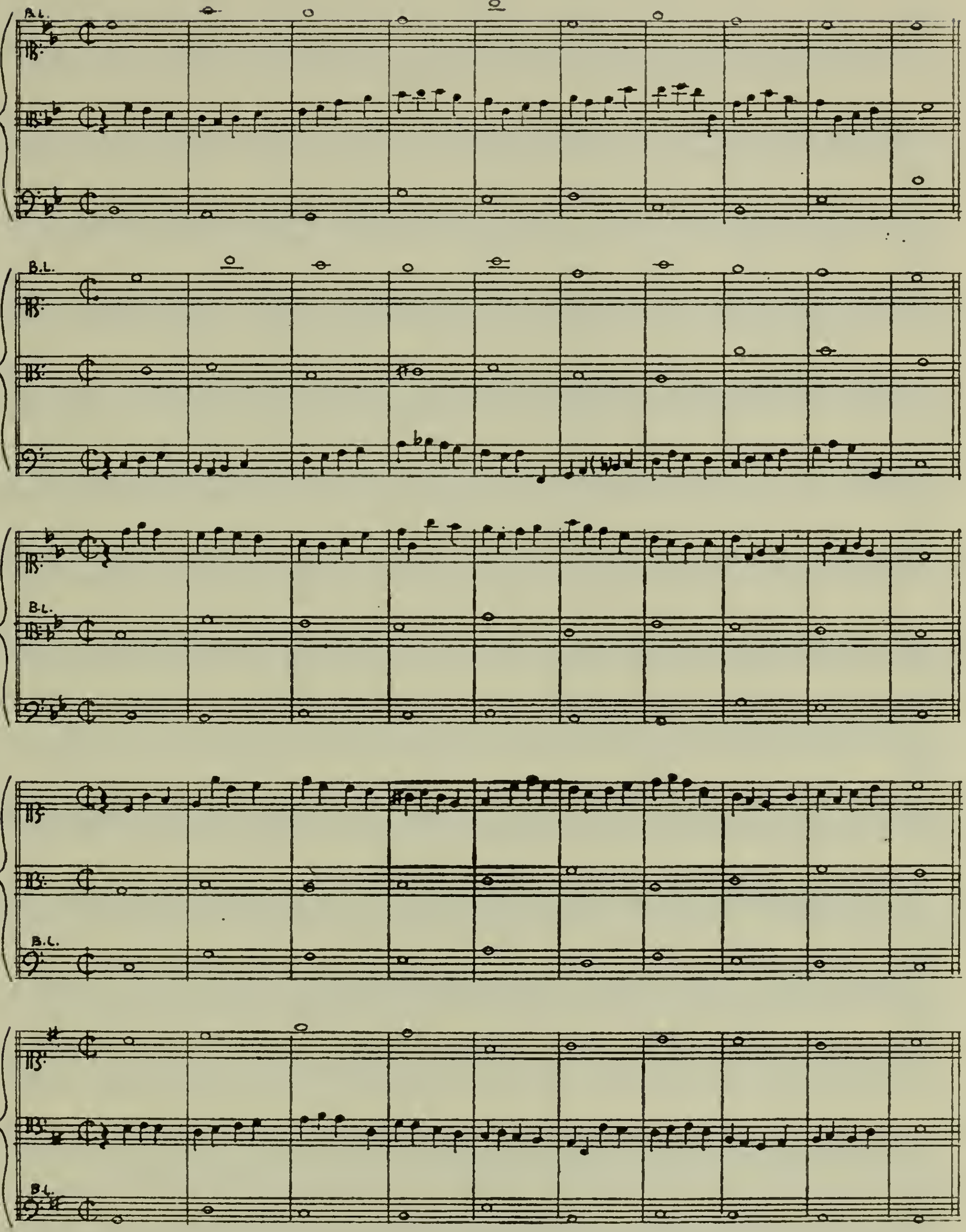
SECOND SPECIES—3 PARTS—MAJOR



SECOND SPECIES—3 PARTS—MINOR



THIRD SPECIES—3 PARTS—MAJOR



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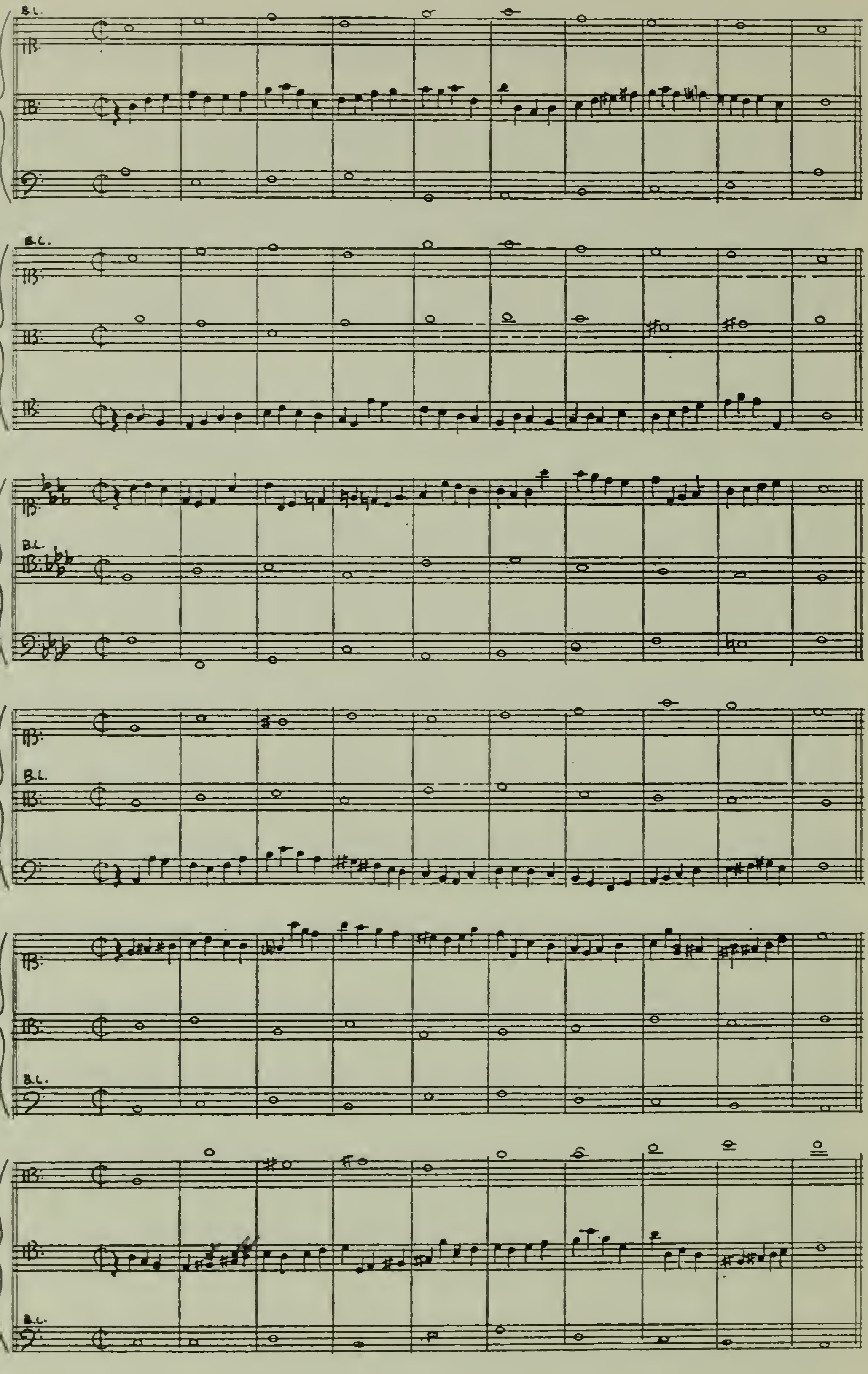
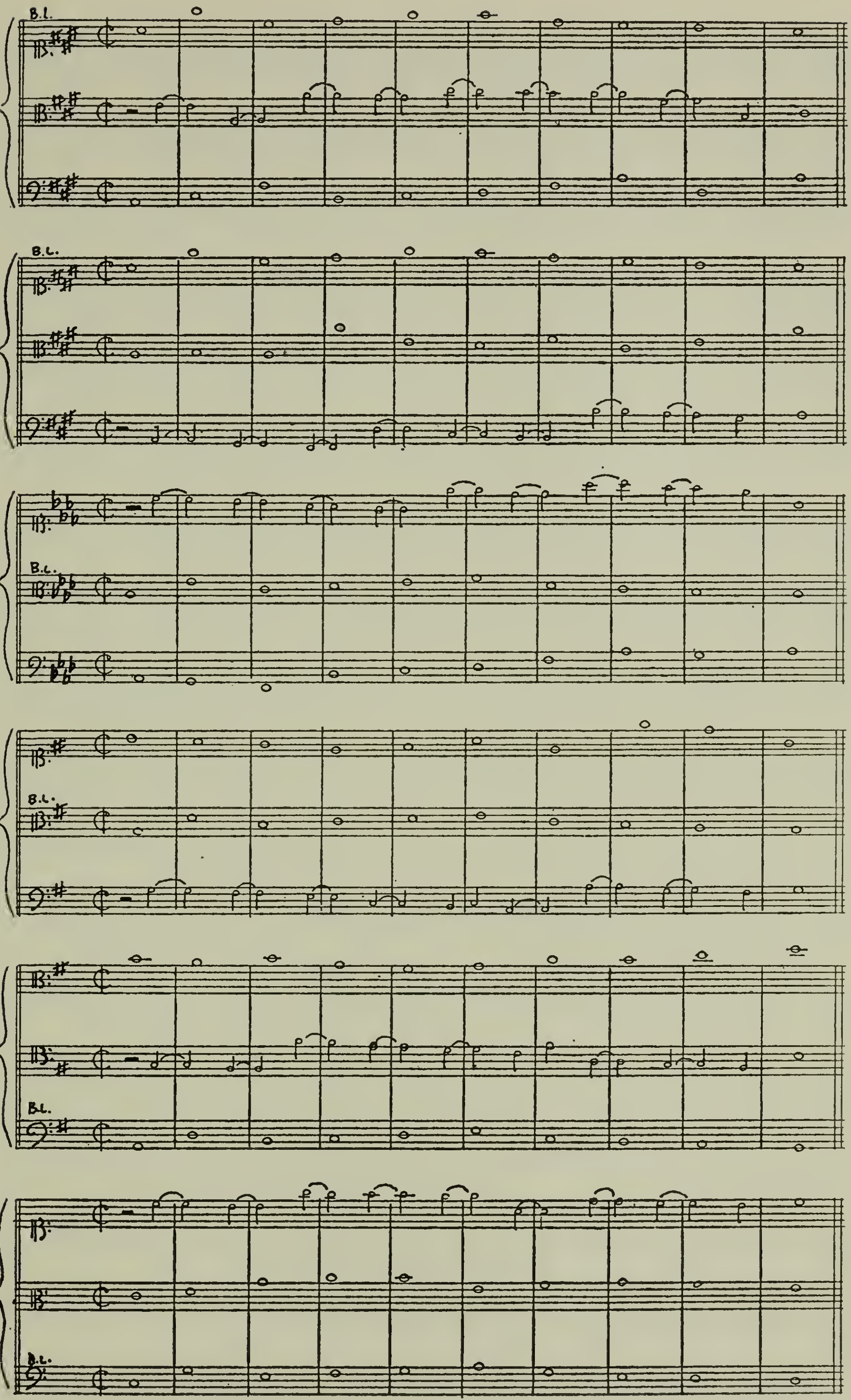
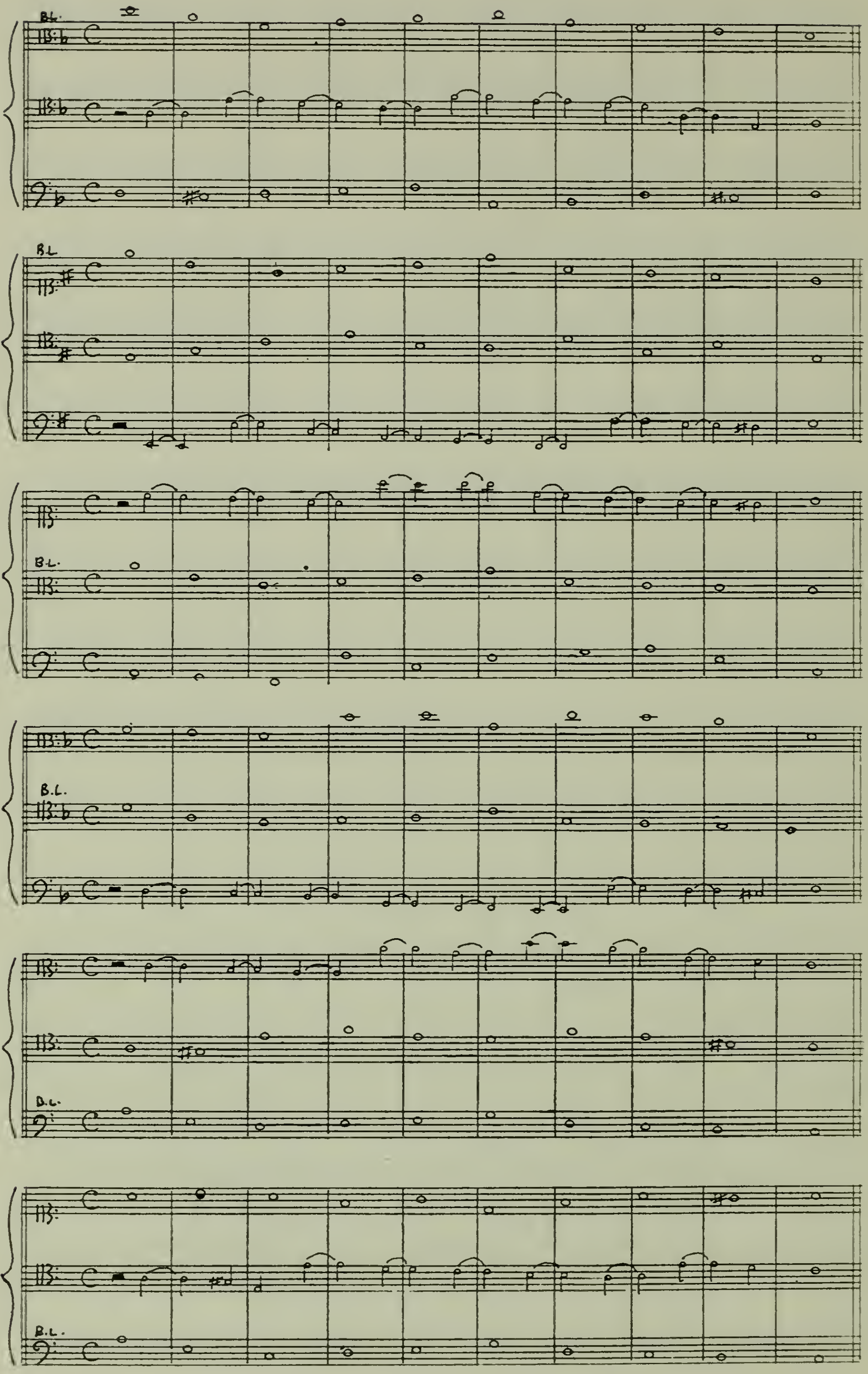


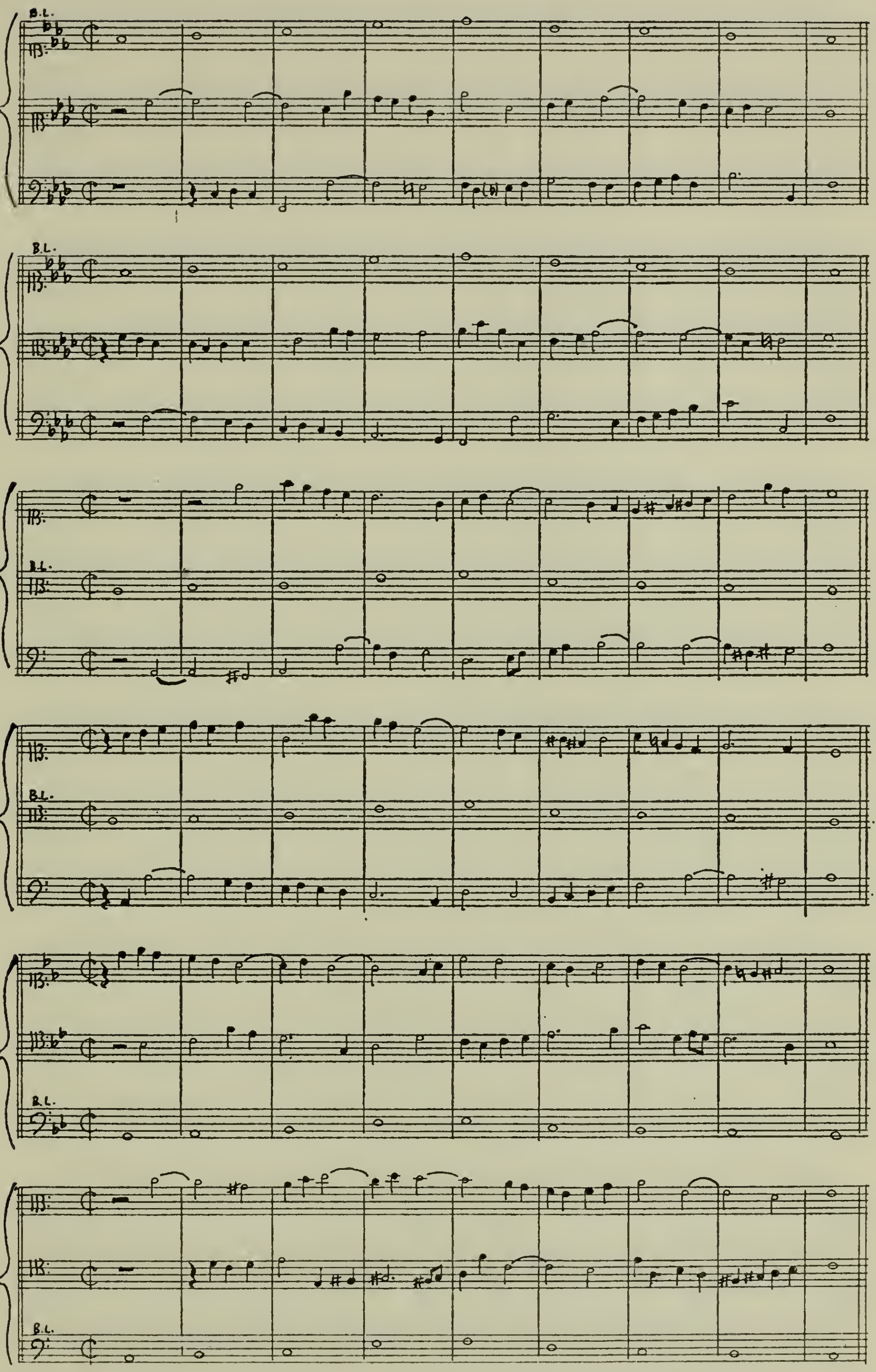
FOURTH SPECIES—3 PARTS—MAJOR



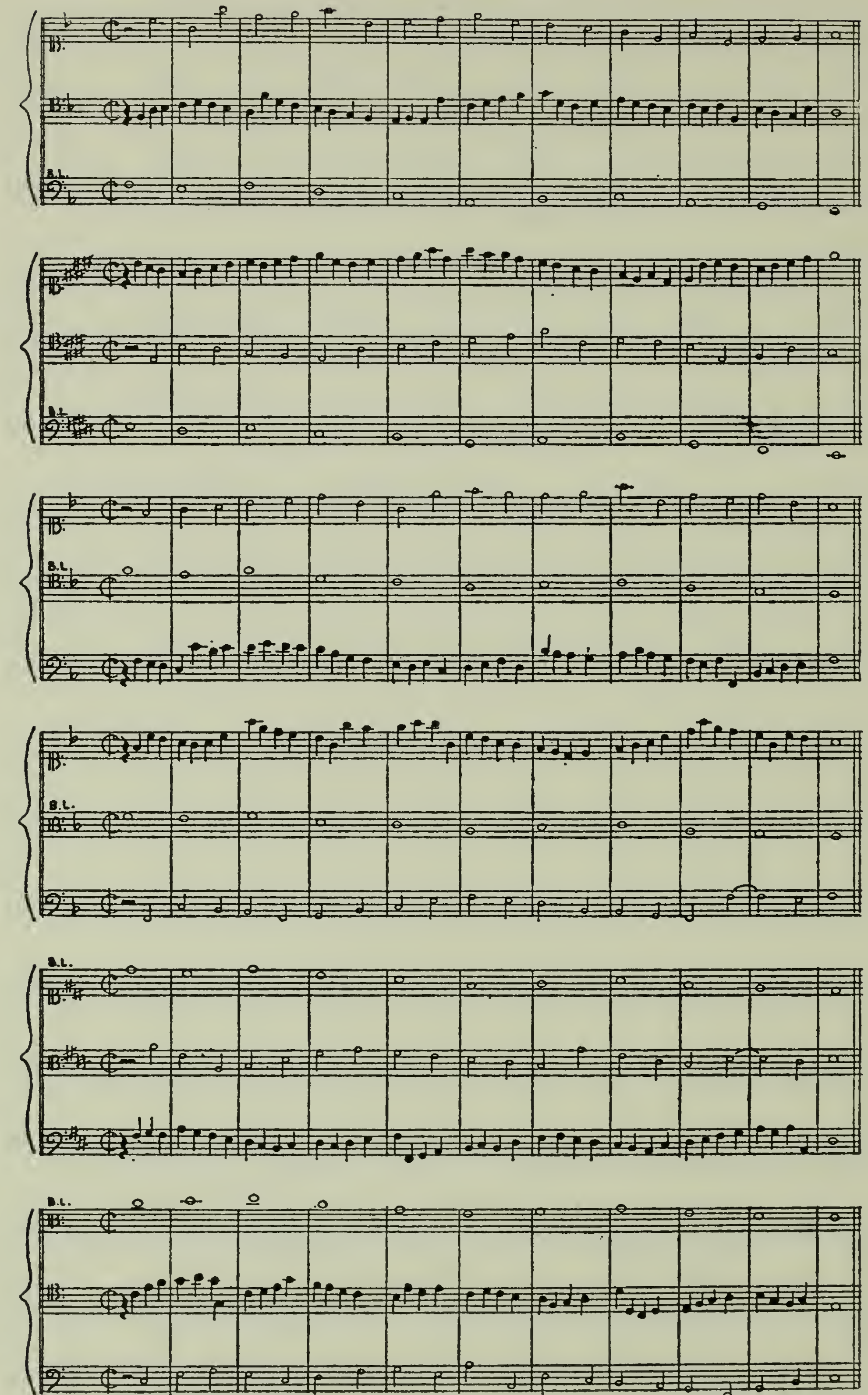
FOURTH SPECIES—3 PARTS—MINOR



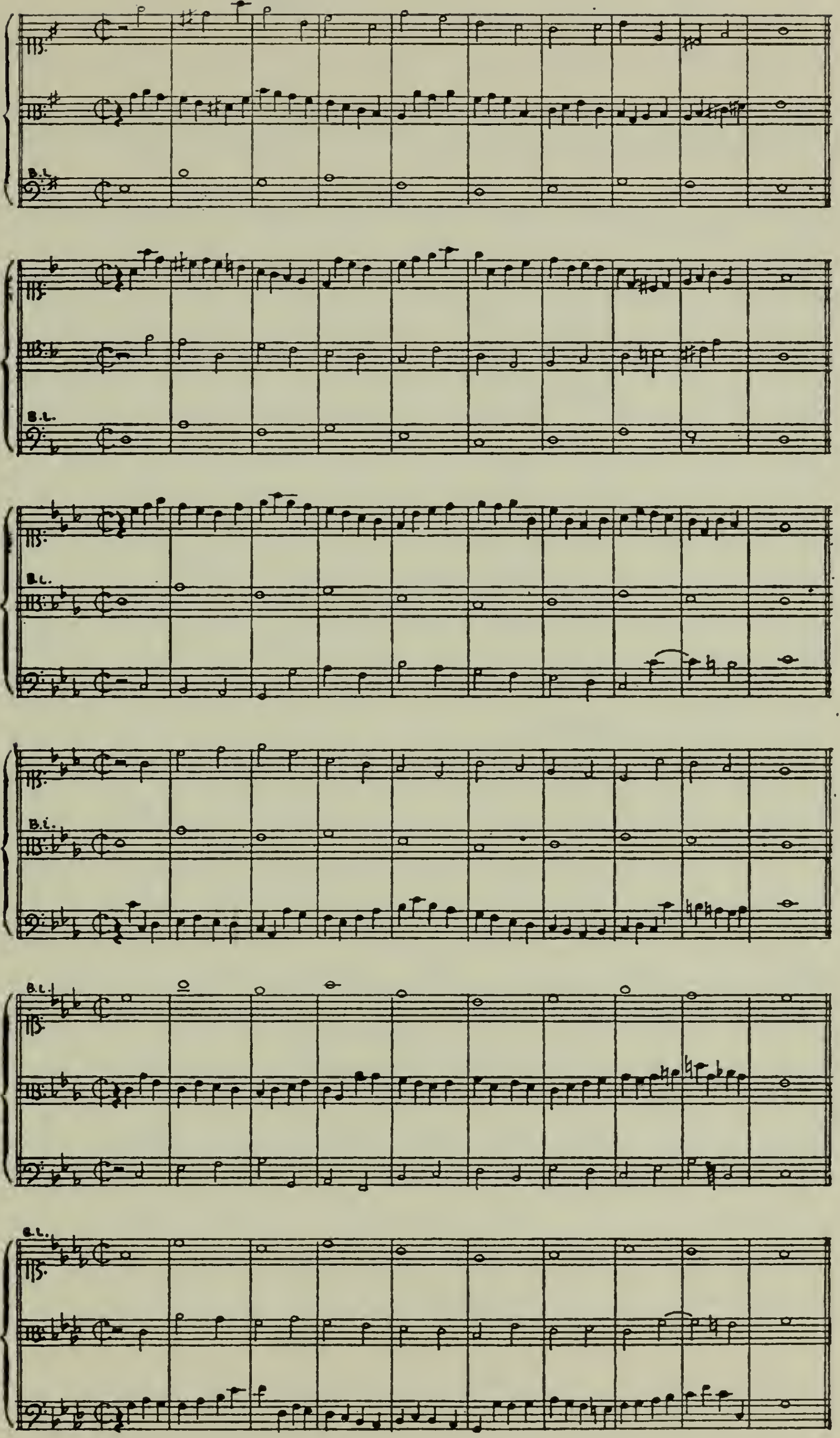
FIFTH SPECIES—3 PARTS—MINOR



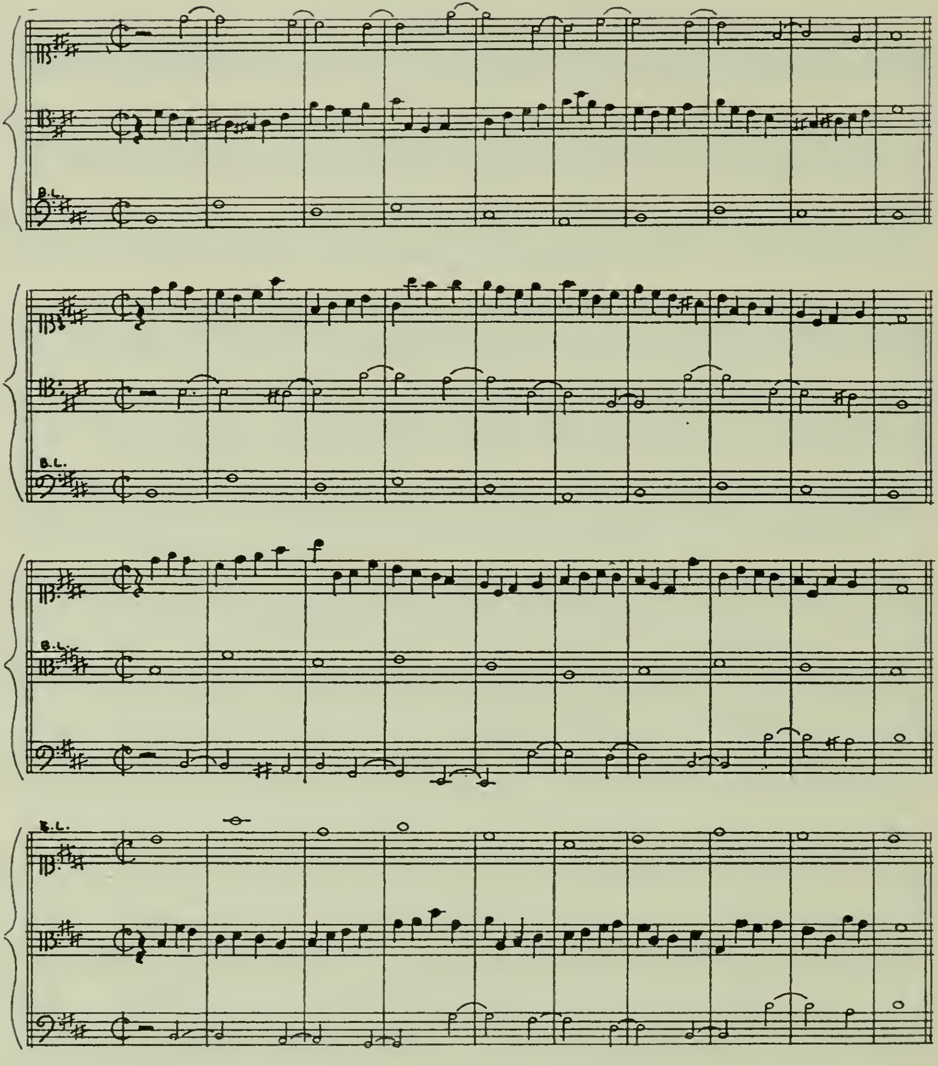
MELANGE NO. 1—3 PARTS—MAJOR NO. 1



MELANGE NO. 1—MINOR



MELANGE NO. 3 - MINOR



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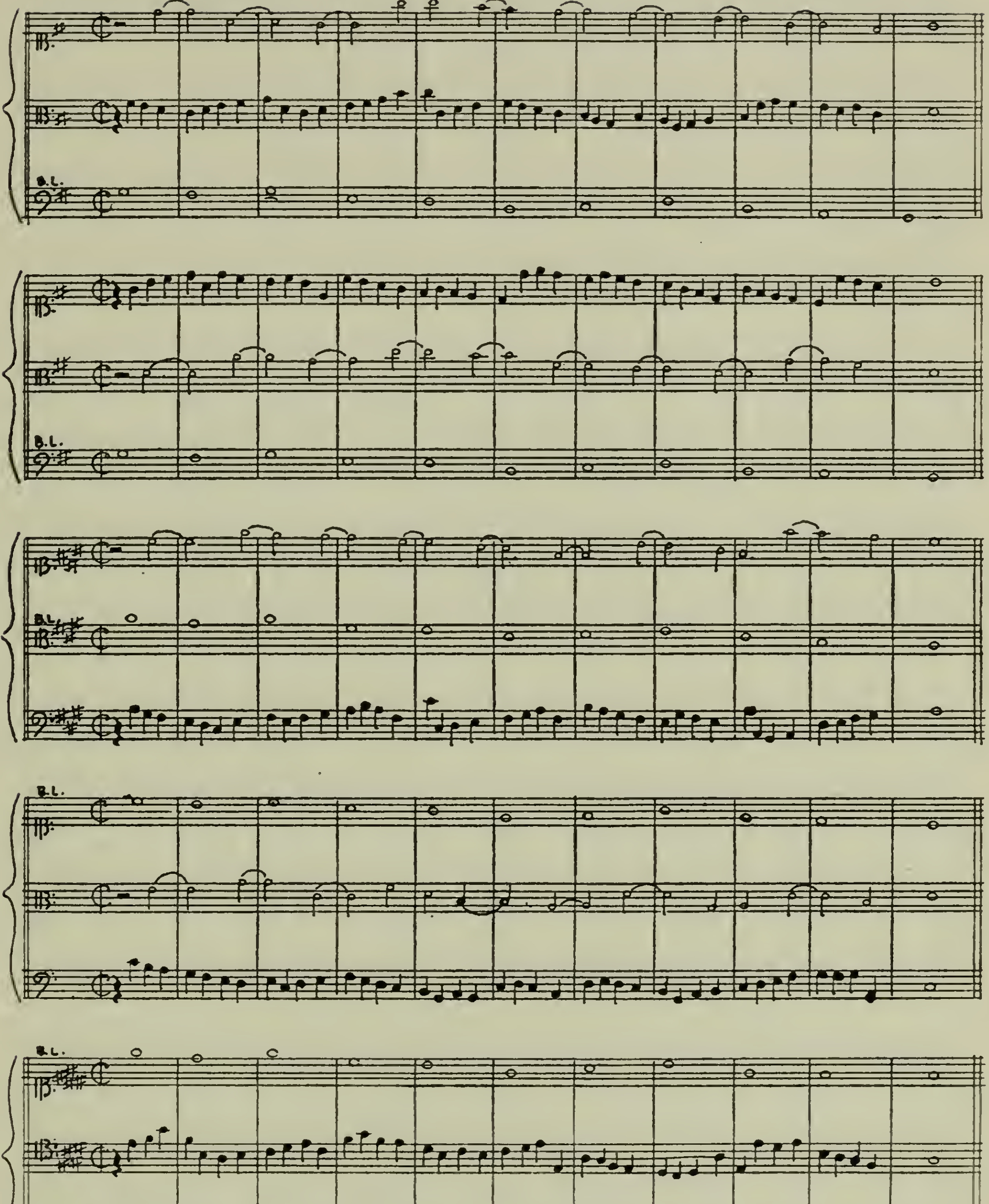
MELANGE NO. 3—MAJOR



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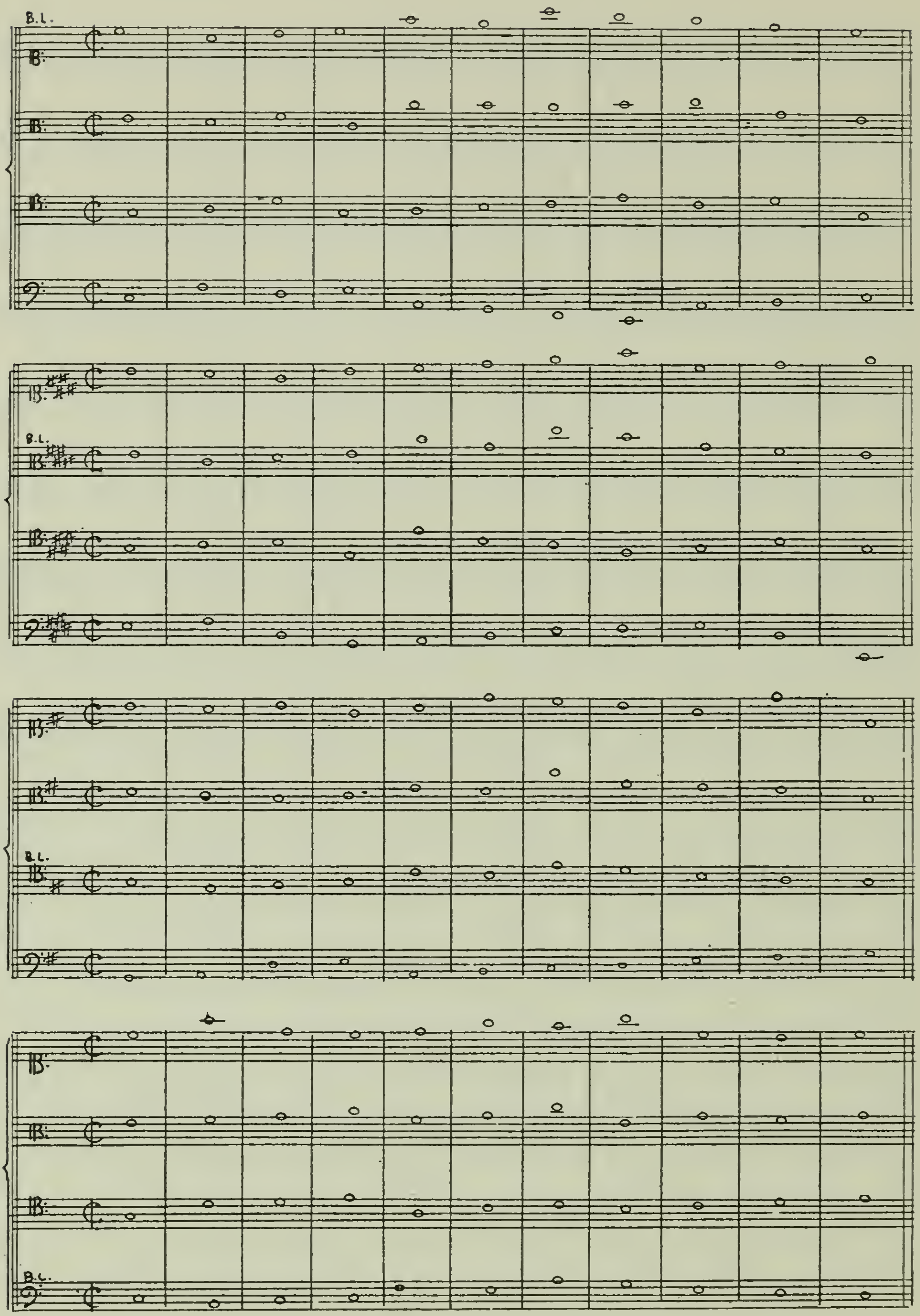
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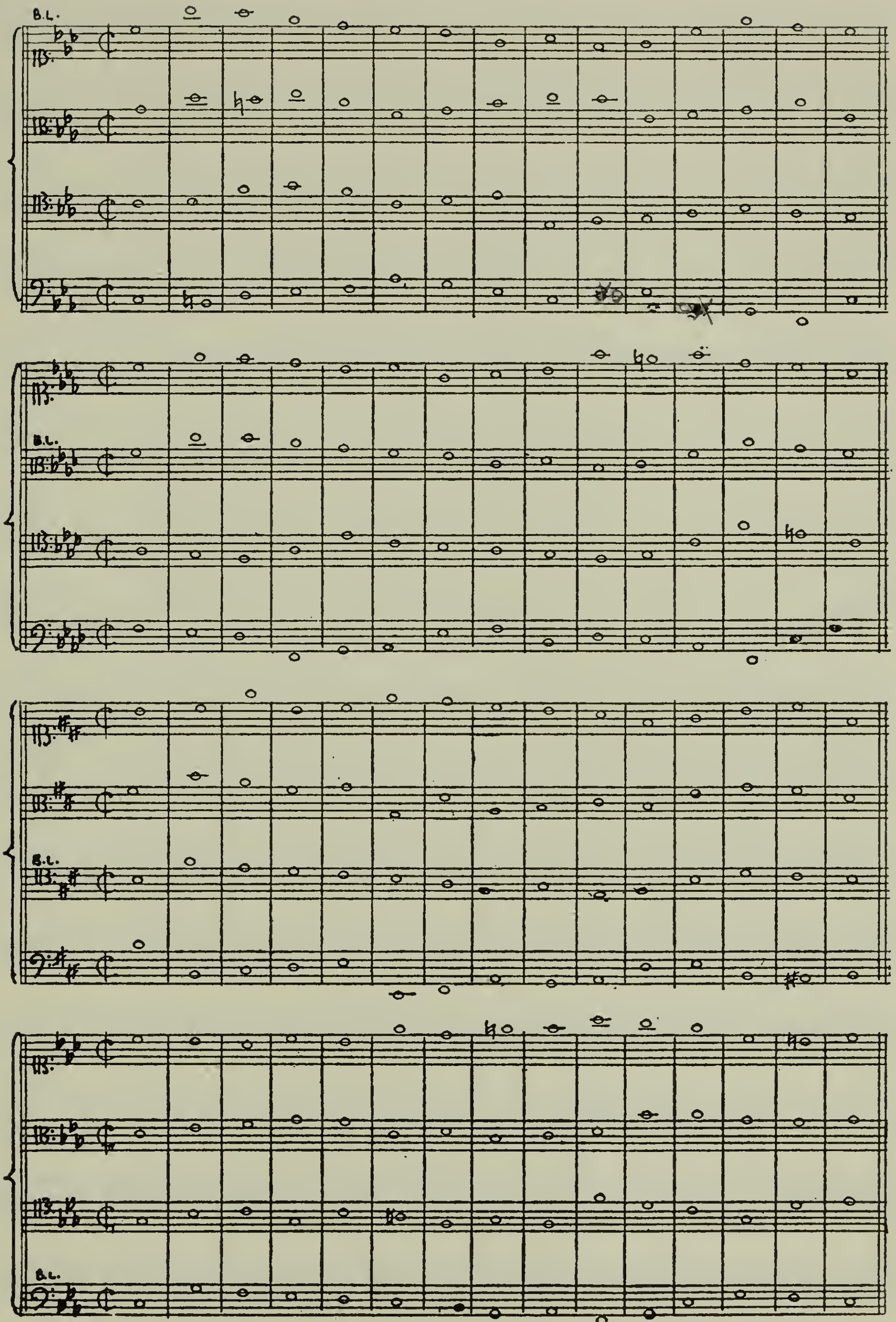
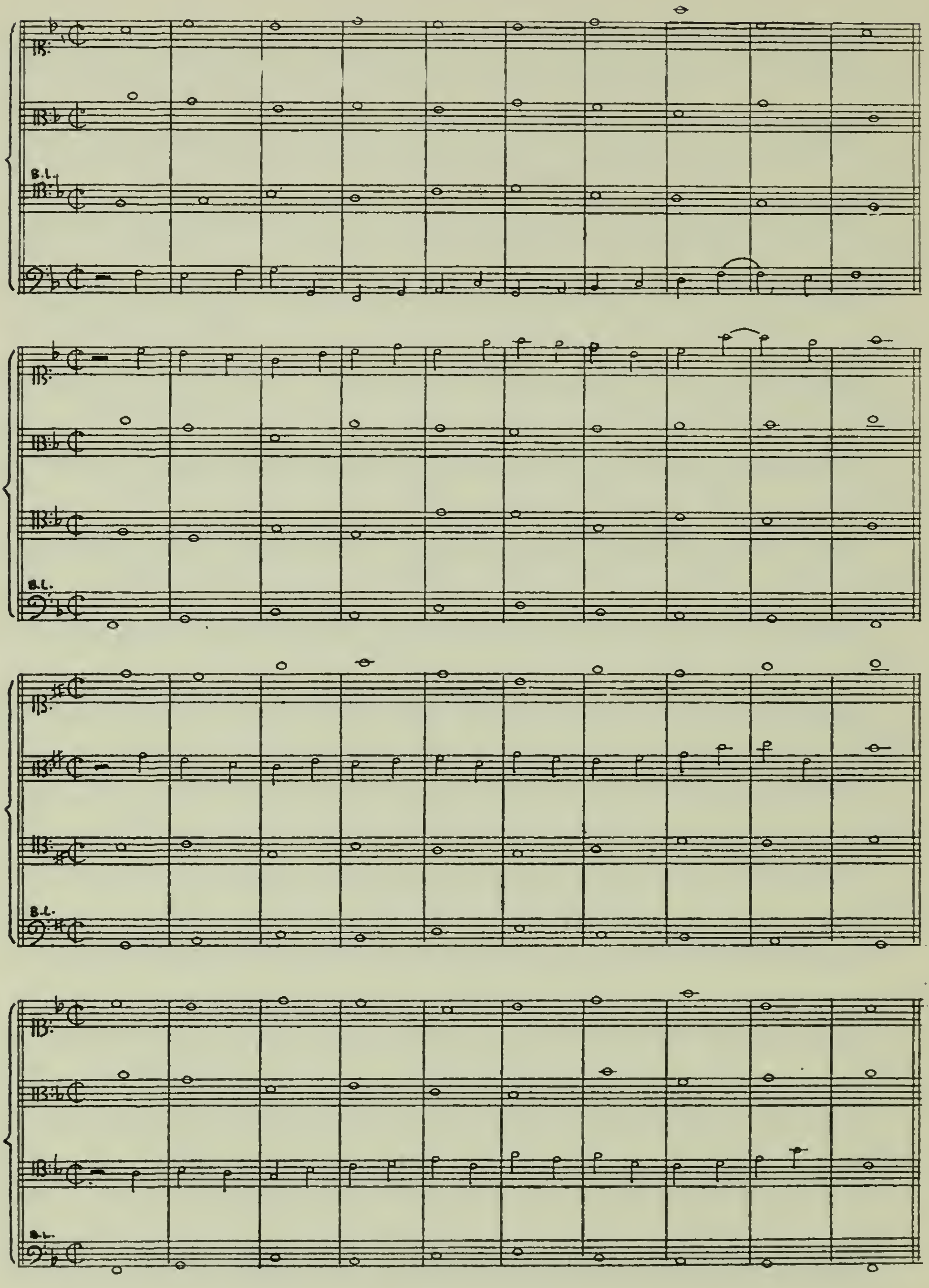
FIRST SPECIES—4 PARTS—MINOR



SECOND SPECIES—4 PARTS—MAJOR (Continued)



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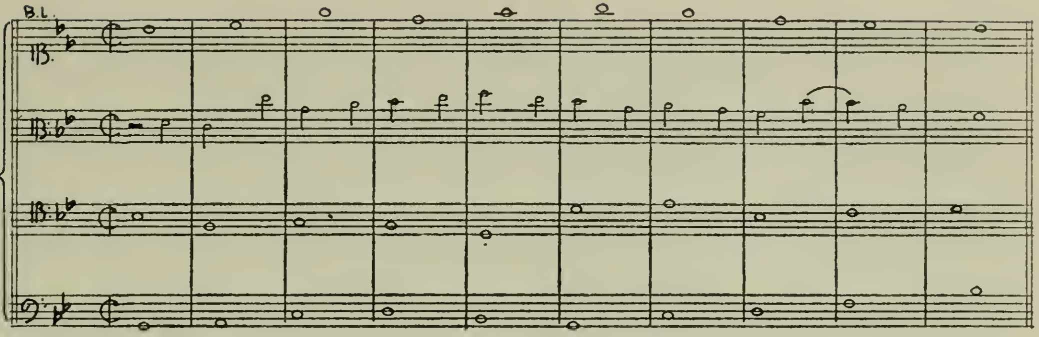

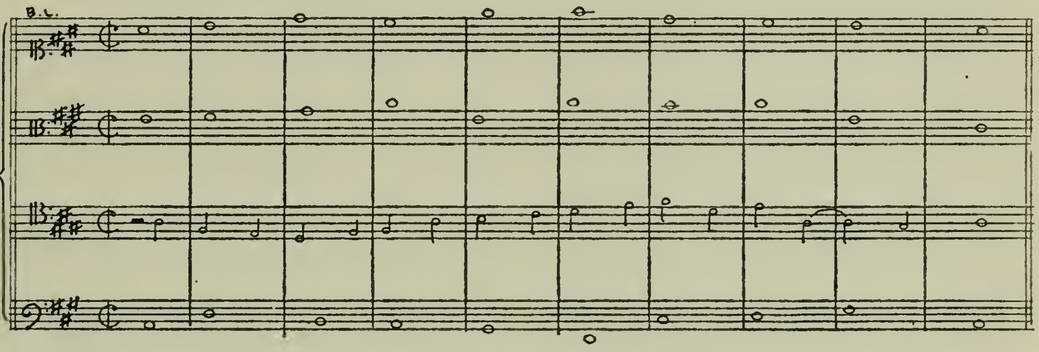

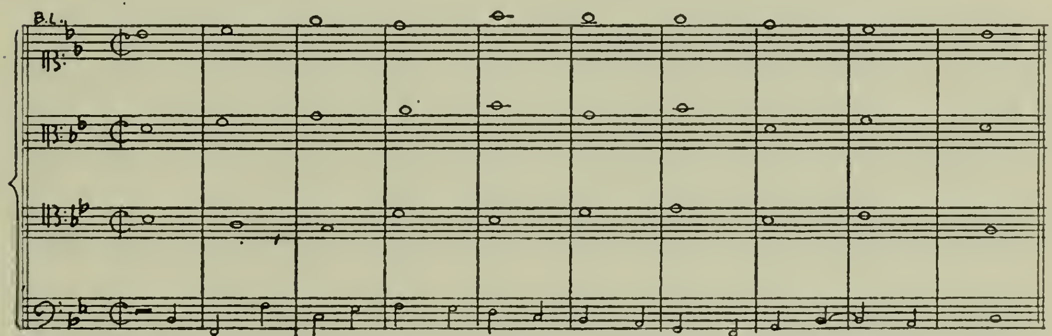

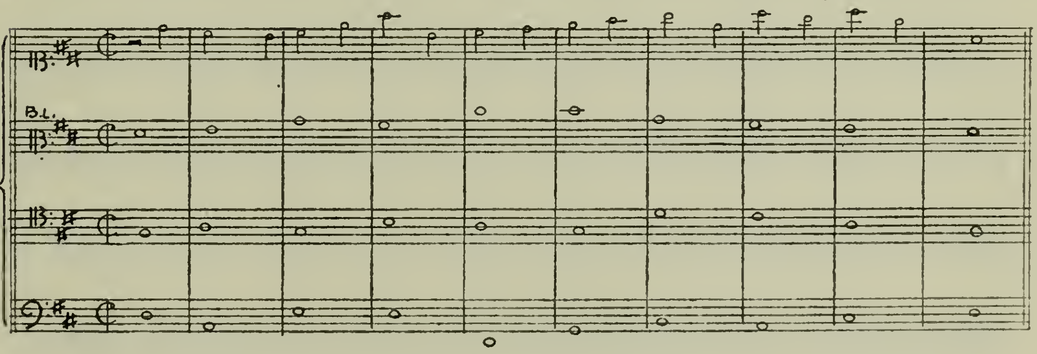

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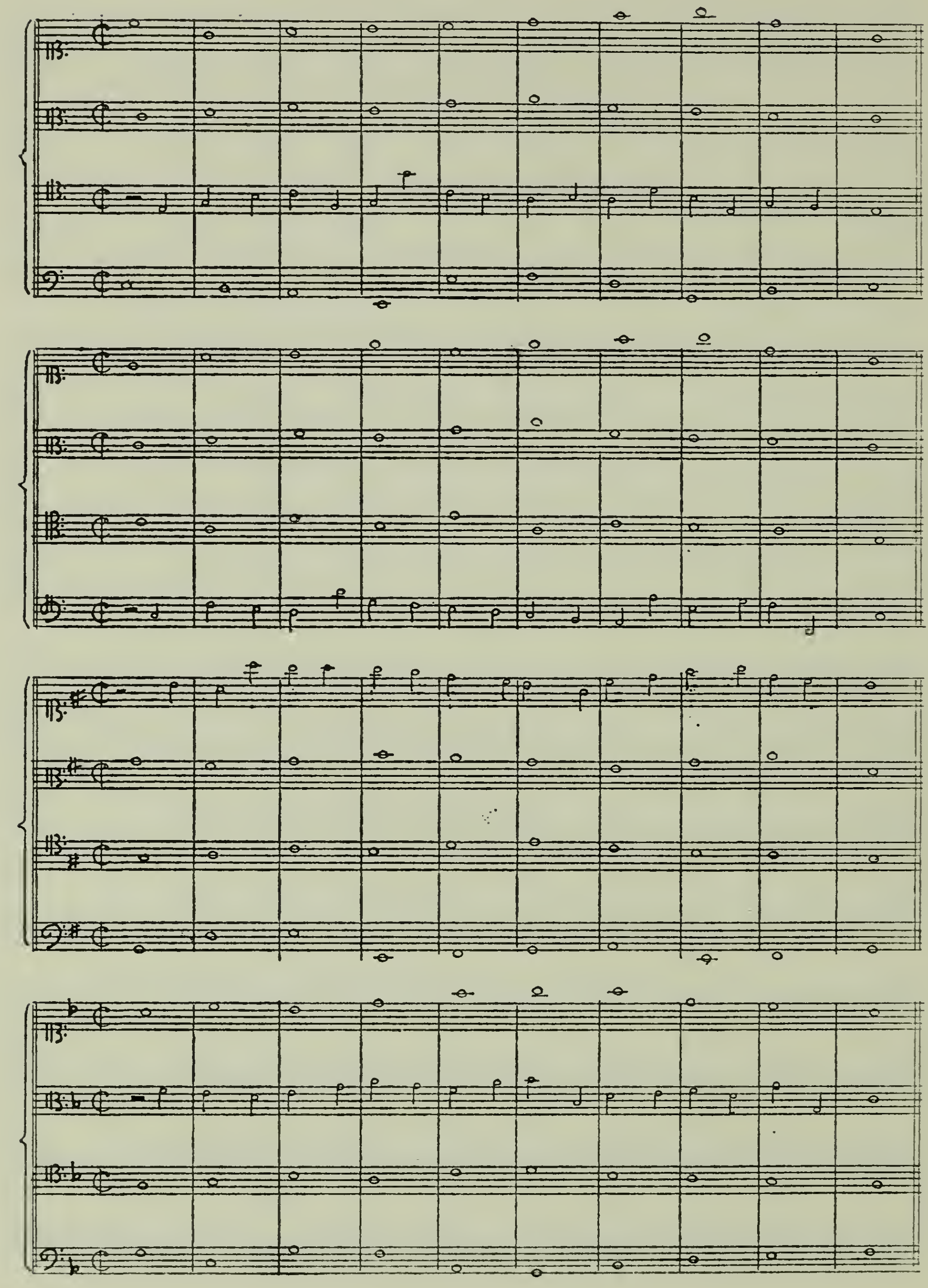

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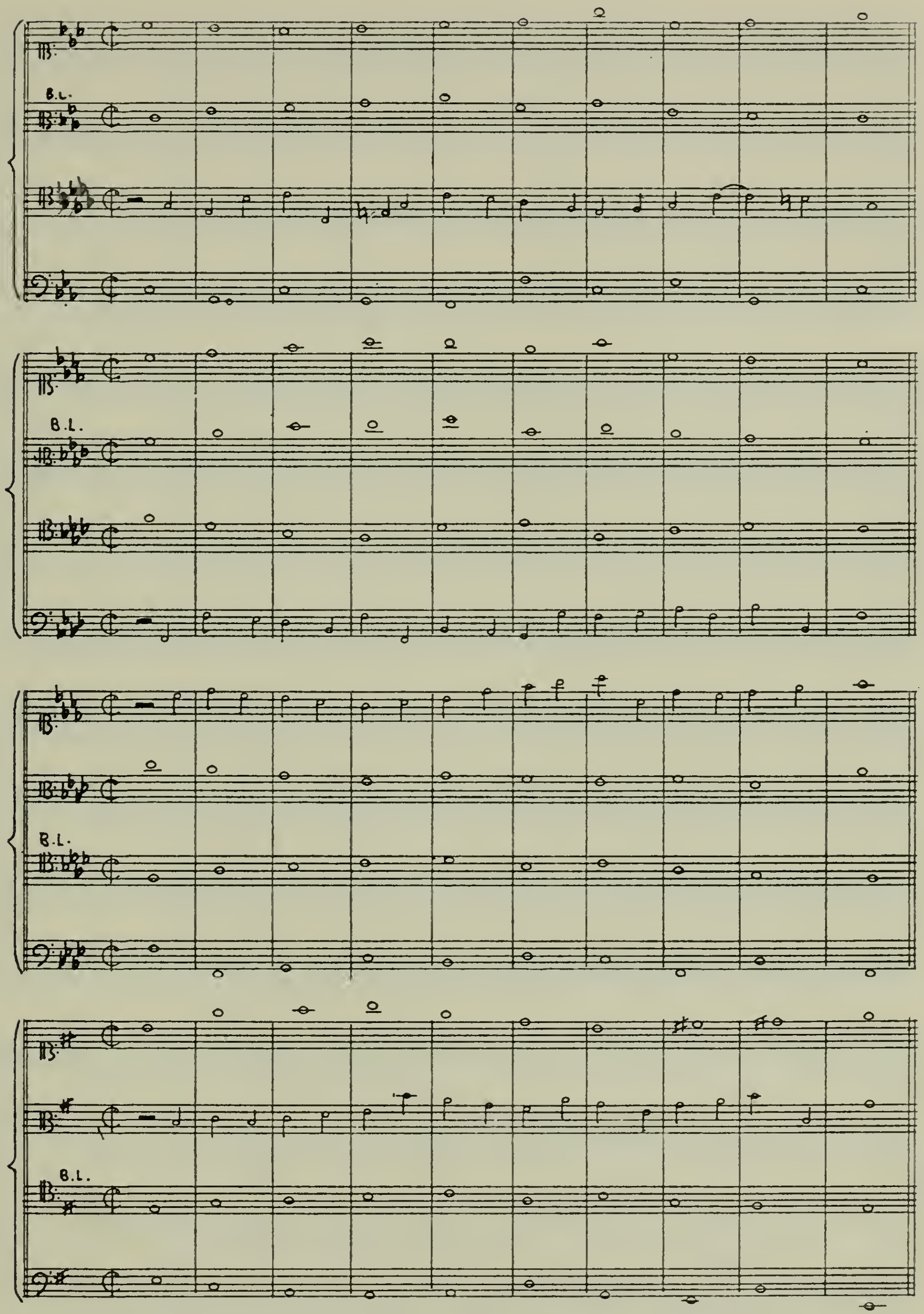

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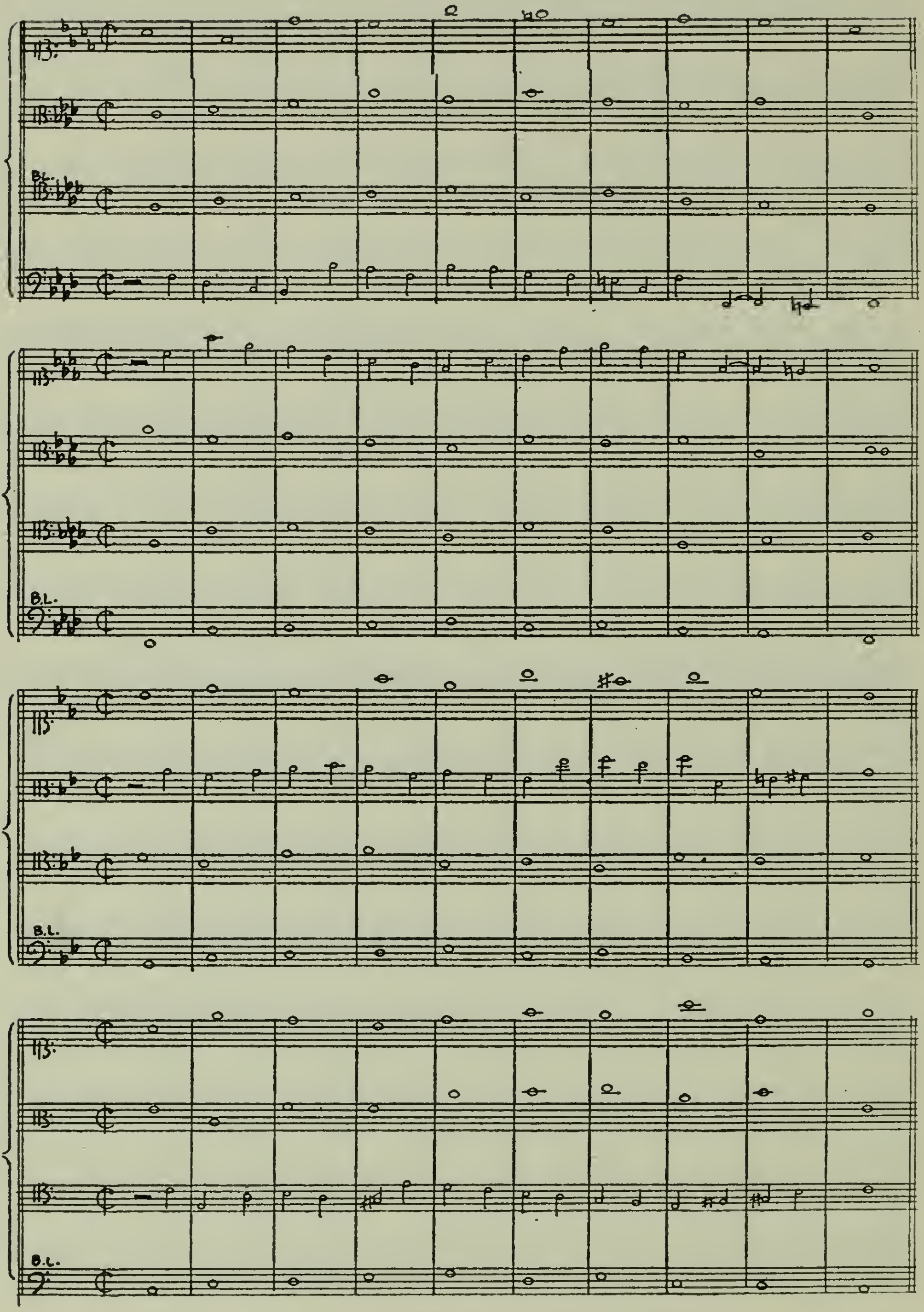

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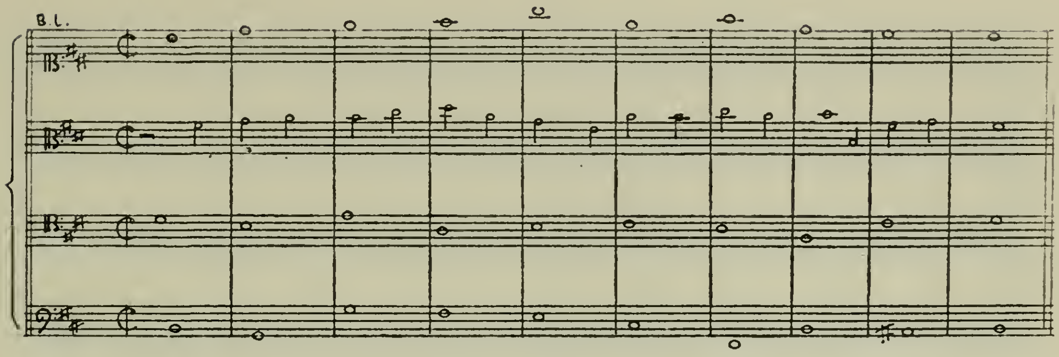

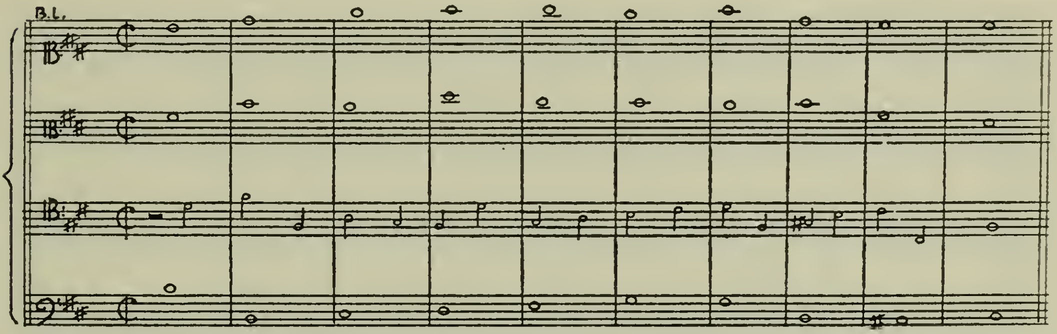

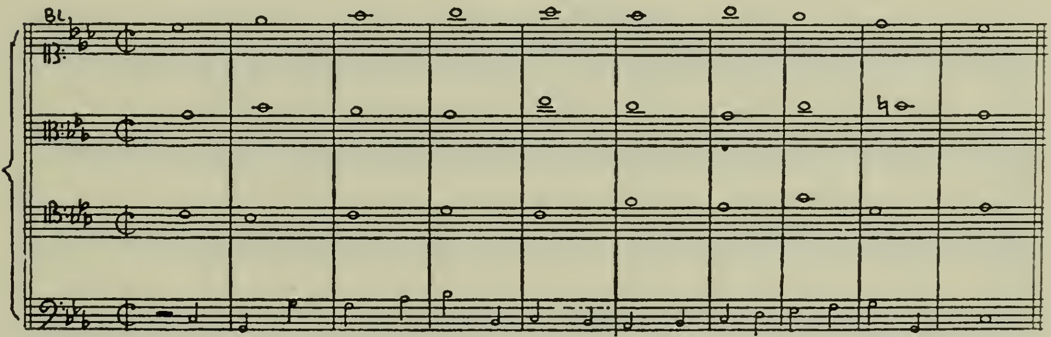

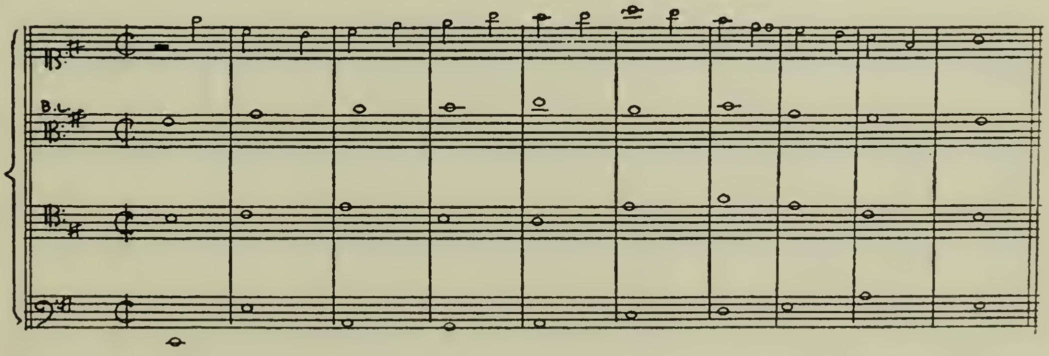

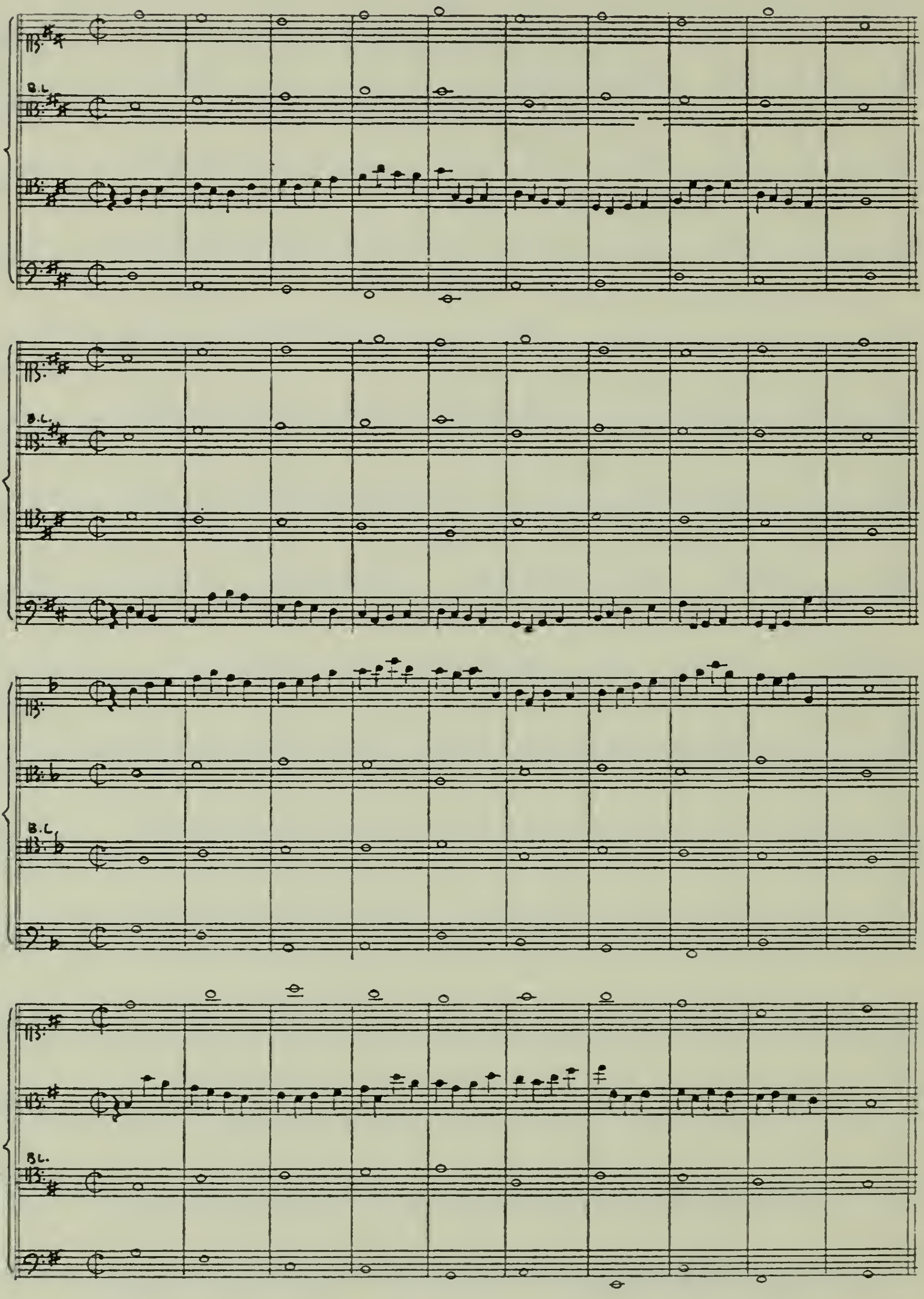
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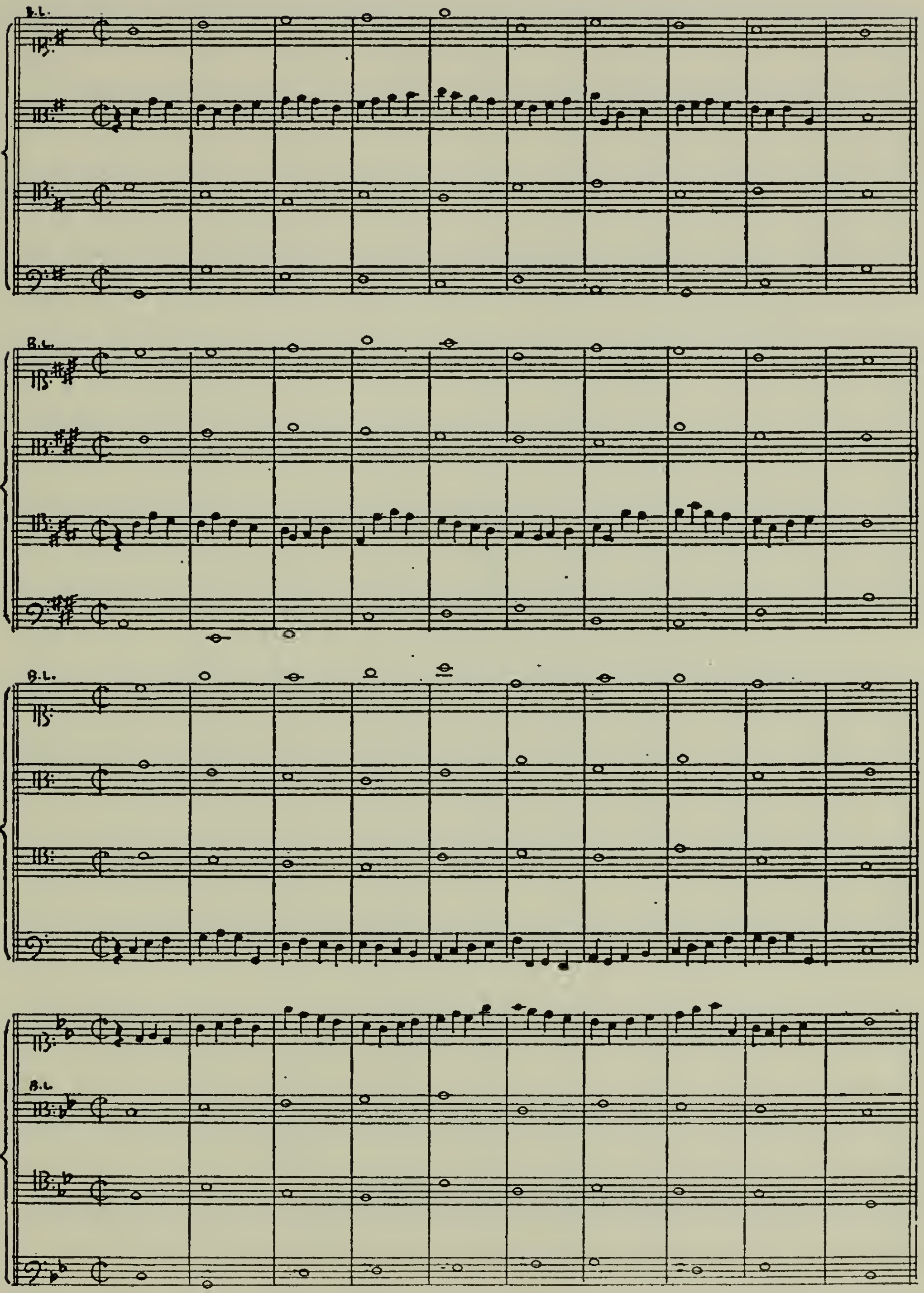
THIRD SPECIES—4 PARTS—MAJOR



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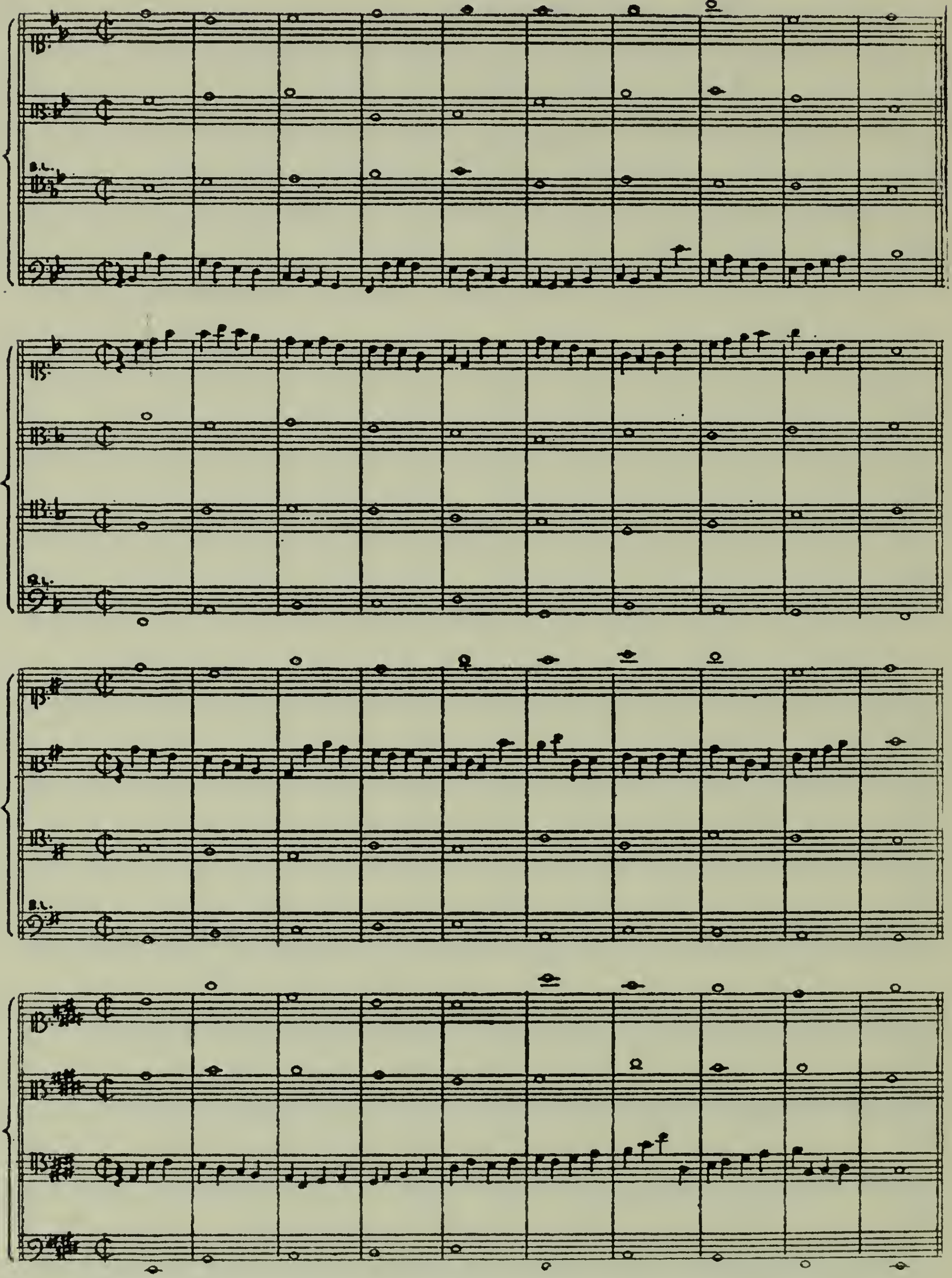

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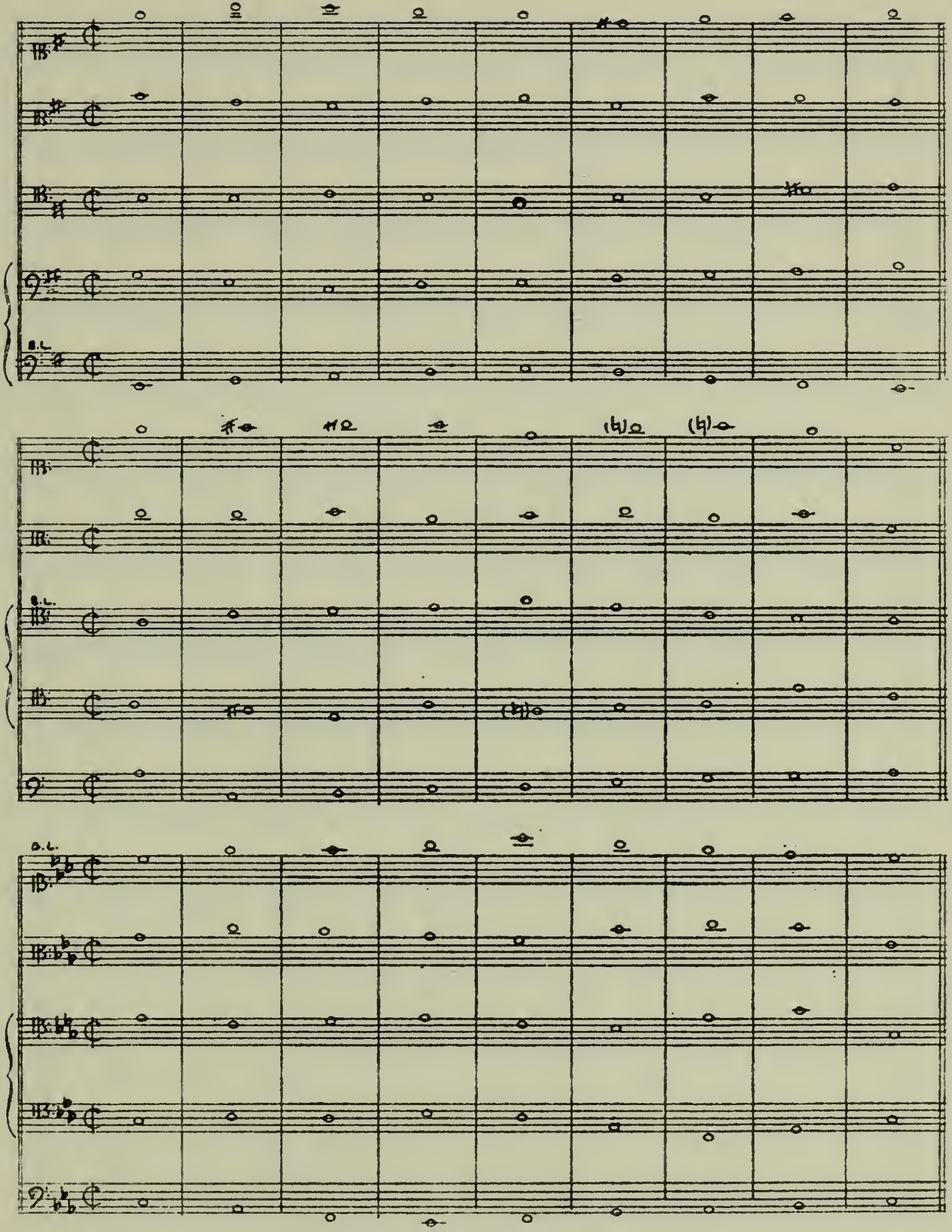

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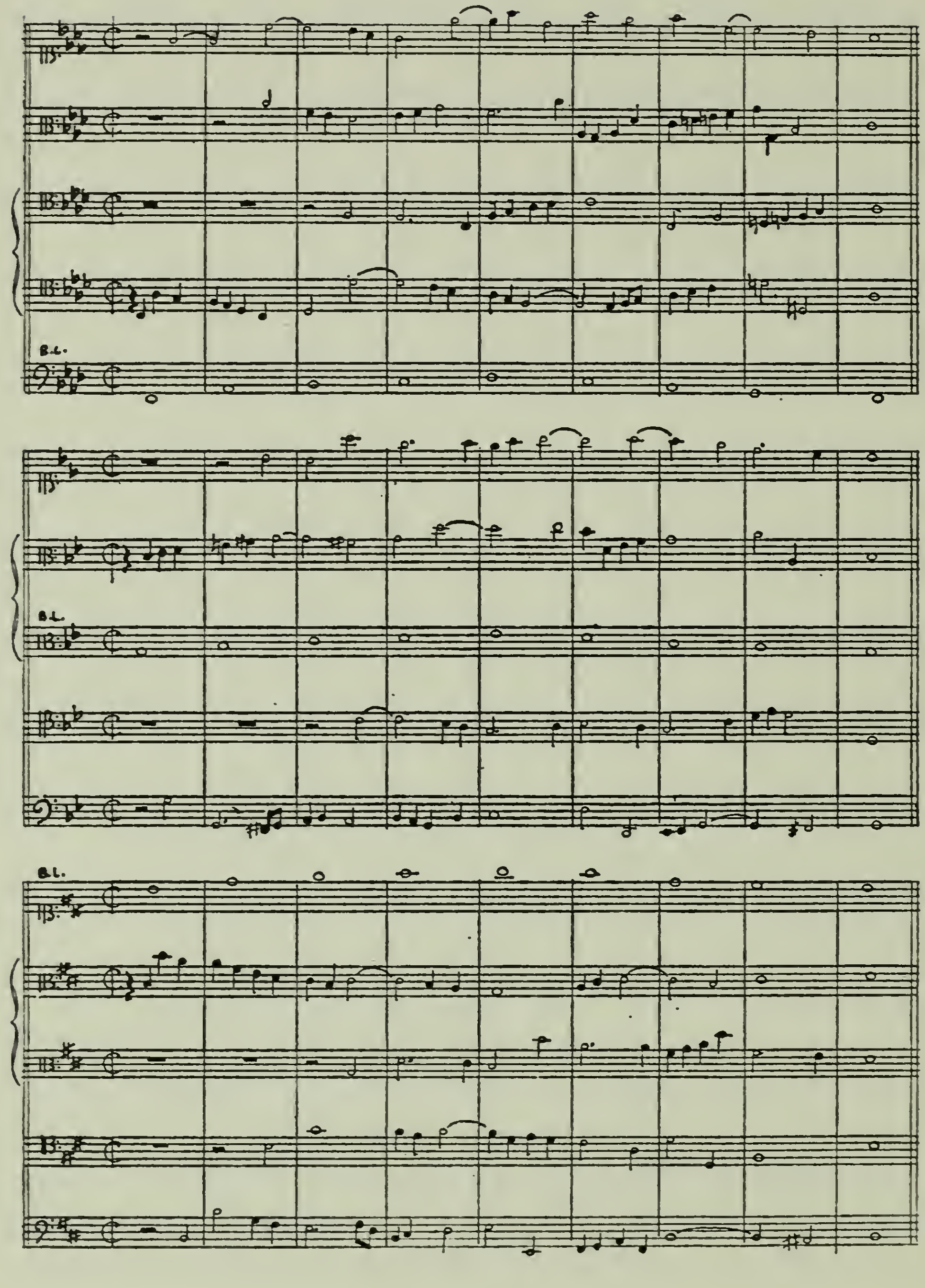

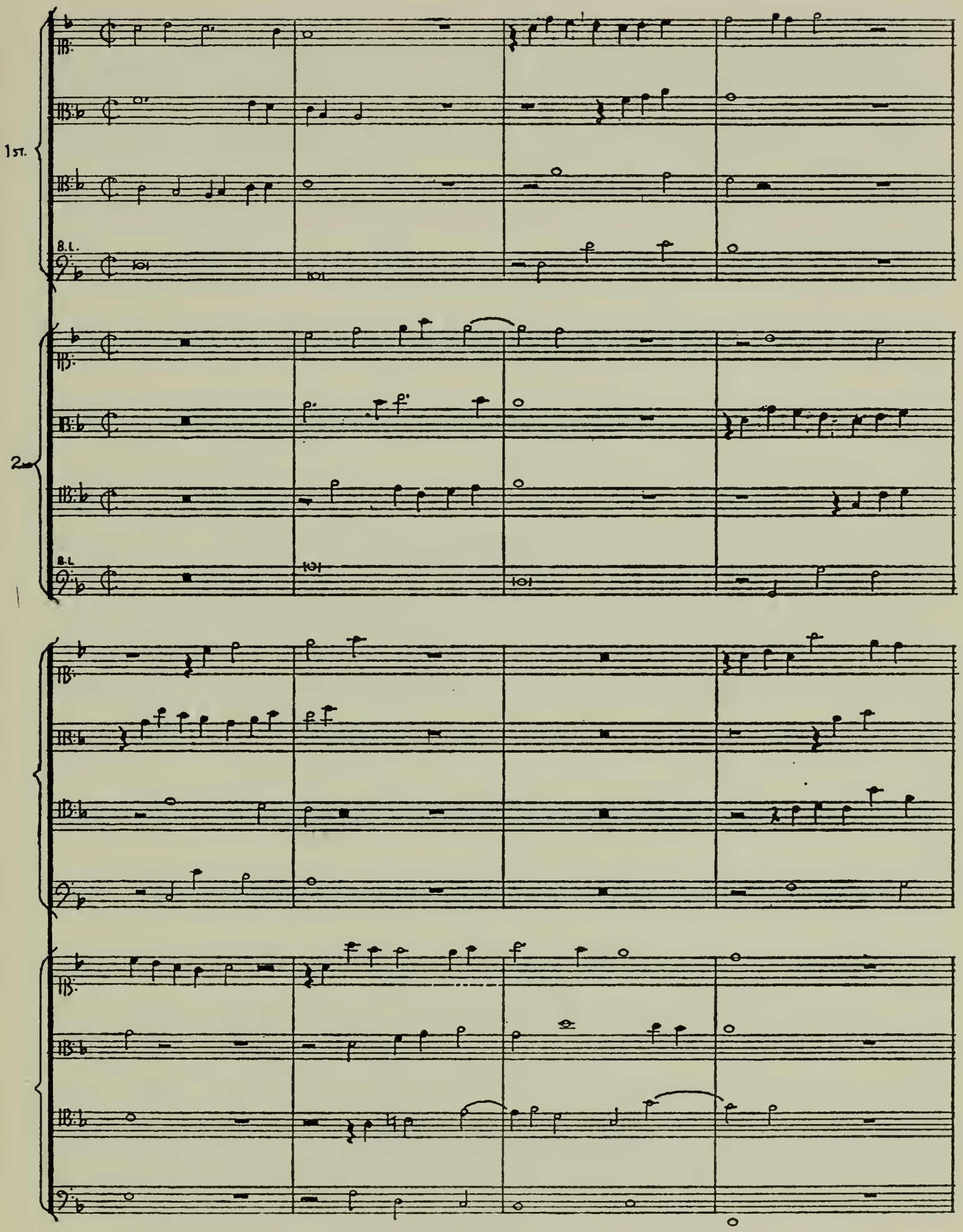
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